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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

ANNUAL REPORT
19 May 2005–12 April 2006

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
OFFICIAL RECORDS, 2006

SUPPLEMENT No. 19

UNITED NATIONS

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NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACPR	Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission
ADB	Asian Development Bank
APCICT	Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development
APCTT	Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CAPSA	Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Secondary Crops Development in Asia and the Pacific
CCOP	Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and Southeast Asia
ECO	Economic Cooperation Organization
FDI	foreign direct investment
GNP	gross national product
ICST	information, communication and space technology
ICT	information and communication technology
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
ODA	official development assistance
SIAP	Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific
SMEs	small and medium-sized enterprises
UNAPCAEM	United Nations Asian and Pacific Centre for Agricultural Engineering and Machinery
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN-EPOC	United Nations ESCAP Pacific Operations Centre
WHO	World Health Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

Introduction

1. The annual report of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, which covers the period from 19 May 2005 to 12 April 2006, was adopted unanimously by the Commission at the fifth plenary meeting of its sixty-second session on 12 April 2006.

Chapter I

ISSUES BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Resolutions and decisions brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Council

At its sixty-second session, ESCAP adopted the following 12 resolutions and 2 decisions, which are brought to the attention of the Council.

A. Resolutions

62/1. Achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the ESCAP region

62/2. Jakarta Declaration on enhancing regional cooperation in infrastructure development, including that related to disaster management

62/3. Implementation of the Plan of Action for Sustainable Tourism Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase II (2006-2012) and the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Tourism Development

62/4. Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network

62/5. Building the information society in Asia and the Pacific

62/6. Managing globalization through strengthened regional cooperation in trade and investment

62/7. Strengthening regional cooperation and coordination of early warning system arrangements for tsunamis through the Multi-Donor Voluntary Trust Fund on Tsunami Early Warning Arrangements in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia

62/8. Implementation of the International Plan of Action for the United Nations Literacy Decade

62/9. Regional follow-up to the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

62/10. Strengthening statistical capacity in Asia and the Pacific

62/11. Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010

62/12. Strengthening Pacific island developing countries and territories through regional cooperation

B. Decisions

62/1. Deferment of consideration of the draft resolution on the establishment of the Asian and Pacific Centre for ICST-enabled Disaster Management (APIDM)

62/2. Procedure followed in the adoption of the report of the Commission on its sixty-second session

Chapter II

WORK OF THE COMMISSION SINCE THE SIXTY-FIRST SESSION

A. Activities of subsidiary bodies

2. During the period under review, the following subsidiary bodies held meetings: Committee on Managing Globalization, Committee on Emerging Social Issues, Committee on Poverty Reduction, Intergovernmental Meeting to Develop the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network, High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on Sustainable Tourism Development and Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries.

3. The dates, bureaux and document symbols of the reports of the meetings are given in annex II to the present report. The reports of those bodies reflect the discussions held, the agreements reached and the decisions taken by them.

B. Other activities

4. Lists of publications issued, meetings held and advisory services provided in the calendar year 2005 are given in annex IV to the present report.

C. Relations with other United Nations programmes

5. The secretariat maintained close and regular liaison with United Nations Headquarters and cooperated with the departments concerned, as well as with the secretariats of the other regional commissions, on projects of common interest.

Chapter III

SIXTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE COMMISSION

A. Attendance and organization of work

6. The sixty-second session of the Commission was held at the Jakarta Convention Centre, Jakarta, from 6 to 12 April 2006. The session comprised two parts. The Senior Officials' Meeting was held from 6 to 8 April 2006 and the Ministerial Meeting from 10 to 12 April 2006.

7. The session was attended by representatives of the following members and associate members:

Members
Afghanistan
Armenia
Australia
Azerbaijan
Bangladesh
Bhutan
Brunei Darussalam
Cambodia
China
Democratic People's Republic of Korea
Fiji
France
India
Indonesia
Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Japan
Kazakhstan
Kiribati
Kyrgyzstan
Lao People's Democratic Republic
Malaysia
Maldives
Marshall Islands
Micronesia (Federated States of)
Mongolia
Myanmar
Nauru
Nepal
Netherlands
Pakistan
Palau
Papua New Guinea
Philippines
Republic of Korea
Russian Federation
Samoa
Singapore
Solomon Islands
Sri Lanka
Thailand
Timor-Leste
Tonga
Turkey
Tuvalu
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
United States of America
Uzbekistan
Vanuatu
Viet Nam

Associate members
Hong Kong, China
Macao, China
New Caledonia
Niue

8. By virtue of rule 3 of the Commission's rules of procedure, representatives of Austria, the Czech Republic, Germany, Israel, Italy, Mexico and Slovakia attended. A representative of the Holy See also attended.

9. The session was attended by a representative of the Regional Commissions New York Office.

10. Representatives of the following United Nations bodies attended: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO, United Nations Development Fund for Women, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Environment Programme and United Nations Human Settlements Programme.

11. Representatives of the following specialized agencies were present in a consultative capacity: International Labour Organization, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Health Organization, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Universal Postal Union, International Telecommunication Union, World Meteorological Organization, International Fund for Agricultural Development and United Nations Industrial Development Organization.

12. Representatives of the following inter-governmental organizations attended as observers: Asian and Pacific Coconut Community, Asian Development Bank, Asian Productivity Organization, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, Colombo Plan Secretariat, International Organization for Migration, Mekong River Commission, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme.

13. Observers were present from the following non-governmental organizations in general consultative status: International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, Muslim World League and World Assembly of Youth; and from the following organizations in special consultative status: ActionAid International and Pan-Pacific and South-East Asia Women's Association.

14. Representatives of the ASEAN Foundation, Centre for Agriculture Policy Studies, Colombo Plan Staff College for Technician Education, Indonesian Trade Union Congress, International Development Research Centre and International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies also attended the session.

15. The list of participants is given in document ESCAP(62)/INF.1/Rev.2.

16. In accordance with rule 13 of its rules of procedure, the Commission elected H.E. Mr. N. Hassan Wirajuda (Indonesia) Chairperson.

17. Following its past practice, the Commission decided to elect the following heads of delegations Vice-Chairpersons: H.E. Mr. Nazir Ahmad Shahidi (Afghanistan), H.E. Mr. Arman Kirakossian (Armenia),

H.E. Mr. Tahir Yagub Budagov (Azerbaijan), H.E. Mr. M. Saifur Rahman (Bangladesh), H.E. Mr. Khy Tainglim (Cambodia), H.E. Mr. Cui Tiankai (China), Hon. Kaliopate Tavola (Fiji), H.E. Mr. Kamal Nath (India), H.E. Mr. Boediono (Indonesia), H.E. Mr. Ali Taiebnia (Islamic Republic of Iran), H.E. Ms. Akiko Yamanaka (Japan), H.E. Mr. Askar Beshimov (Kyrgyzstan), H.E. Mr. Phongsavath Boupha (Lao People's Democratic Republic), Hon. Senator Dato Sri Mohd. Effendi Norwawi (Malaysia), Hon. Hamdun Hameed (Maldives), H.E. Mr. Gerald M. Zackios (Marshall Islands), H.E. Mr. Tsegmid Tsengel (Mongolia), H.E. U Soe Tha (Myanmar), H.E. Mr. David Adeang (Nauru), Hon. Mr. Shankar Prasad Sharma (Nepal), H.E. Mr. Paul Tiensten (Papua New Guinea), H.E. Mr. Hermogenes E. Ebdane, Jr. (Philippines), H.E. Mr. Kyu-hyung Lee (Republic of Korea), H.E. Mr. Aleksander Yakovenko (Russian Federation), Hon. Sarath Amunugama (Sri Lanka), Hon. Sato Kilman (Vanuatu) and H.E. Mr. Dao Viet Trung (Viet Nam).

18. The Senior Officials' Meeting was divided into three Committees of the Whole. Committee of the Whole I elected H.E. Mr. Mochamad S. Hidayat (Indonesia) Chairperson and H.E. Ms. Adi Litia Samanunu Qalirea Talakuli Cakobau (Fiji) and Mr. Purushottam Ojha (Nepal) Vice-Chairpersons. Committee of the Whole II elected Ms. Noumea Simi (Samoa) Chairperson and Mr. Tajamul Altaf (Pakistan) and Mr. Chamnan Wattanasiri (Thailand) Vice-Chairpersons. Committee of the Whole III elected Mr. A.M.D. Bandusena (Sri Lanka) Chairperson and H.E. Mr. Yaichil Batsuuri (Mongolia) and Ms. Caroline Sylvia Tupoulahi-Fusimalohi (Tonga) Vice-Chairpersons.

19. The Commission also constituted a Working Group on Draft Resolutions, under the chairmanship of Mr. Zhang Wanhai (China), to consider draft resolutions submitted during the session. Mr. Perry Head (Australia) and Mr. Huseyin Ergani (Turkey) were elected Vice-Chairpersons of the Working Group.

B. Agenda

20. The Commission adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the session:
   - (a) Opening addresses;
   - (b) Election of officers;
   - (c) Adoption of the agenda.
2. Policy issues for the ESCAP region:
   - (a) Implications of recent economic and social developments;
   - (b) Strengthening Pacific island developing countries and territories through regional cooperation;
   - (c) Enhancing regional cooperation in infrastructure development, including that related to disaster management.
3. Implementation of the Jakarta Declaration on Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific: the Way Forward 2015.
4. Key developments and activities at the regional level:
   - (a) Poverty reduction;
   - (b) Managing globalization;
   - (c) Emerging social issues.
5. Least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.
6. Management issues:
   - (a) Programme performance report for the biennium 2004-2005;
   - (b) Programme changes for the biennium 2006-2007;
   - (c) Draft strategic framework for the biennium 2008-2009;
   - (d) Monitoring and evaluation guidelines;
   - (e) Work of the regional institutions;
   - (f) 2005 World Summit Outcome: implications for the work of ESCAP.
7. Technical cooperation activities of ESCAP and announcement of intended contributions.
8. Activities of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission.
9. Reports of regional intergovernmental bodies.
10. Date, venue and theme topic for the sixty-third session of the Commission.
11. Other matters.
12. Adoption of the report of the Commission.

C. Account of proceedings

21. The Acting Chairperson of the sixty-first session, H.E. Mr. Shankar Prasad Sharma (Nepal), called the meeting to order and chaired the opening session. The Executive Secretary of ESCAP read out a message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations and delivered a statement.

22. H.E. Mr. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, President of Indonesia, delivered the inaugural address

and declared open the Ministerial Meeting of the sixty-second session and the Pacific Leaders' United Nations ESCAP Special Session (PLUS).

23. PLUS was held following the inaugural session. It was presided over by H.E. Mr. Kessai Note, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and moderated by the Executive Secretary of ESCAP. The summary of discussions of PLUS is contained in the section of the present report on Strengthening Pacific island developing countries and territories through regional cooperation and PLUS.

Message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations

24. In his message, the Secretary-General urged the representatives to use the meeting to sustain the momentum generated by the World Summit held in New York in September 2005. While world leaders had not achieved everything they might have hoped for, they had agreed on progress across a broad front. They had given a resounding reaffirmation of the Millennium Development Goals, with developing countries committing themselves to producing by the end of 2006 national strategies for reaching the Goals. Furthermore, world leaders had achieved a breakthrough on the responsibility to protect a population when it was threatened with genocide, ethnic cleansing or crimes against humanity. In that regard, all Member States had expressed the will to act collectively through the Security Council. The creation of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Human Rights Council were major milestones.

25. The World Summit also generated a much-improved emergency fund that would enable a prompt response to humanitarian disasters, and it endorsed the new Democracy Fund. The previous month, the Secretary-General had placed before the United Nations membership a new set of proposals for a radical overhaul of the management of the Organization. Building on previous rounds of reform, the goal of the Secretary-General was a more transparent, accountable and effective instrument of service to humankind.

26. The Secretary-General noted that the reforms of ESCAP in recent years were an important part of efforts to adapt the United Nations. ESCAP, together with the other four regional commissions, was taking steps to strengthen management, improve coordination and ensure that its work reflected the priorities of Member States. The Secretary-General thanked ESCAP for its contribution to system-wide reform and offered his best wishes for a productive session.

Statement by the Executive Secretary of ESCAP

27. The Executive Secretary extended a warm welcome to all those attending the sixty-second session of the Commission and expressed deep gratitude to His Excellency President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono for the hosting of the sixty-second session of the Commission by the Government of Indonesia, and for inaugurating the Ministerial Meeting.

28. The Executive Secretary paid a warm tribute to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, under the leadership of H.E. Mr. Hassan Wirajuda, for excellent collaboration in the organization of the session.

29. The Executive Secretary also extended a special welcome to the Presidents of Kiribati and the Marshall Islands, the Prime Minister of Tuvalu and the Vice-Presidents of the Federated States of Micronesia and Palau, as well as senior officials from the Pacific island developing countries and territories.

30. The Executive Secretary informed the Commission that it was the third time in the history of ESCAP that the Government of Indonesia had hosted a Commission session. The first occasion had been in 1953 when the ninth session had been held in Bandung. In 1988, the forty-fourth session had been held in Jakarta.

31. The Executive Secretary further stated that the presence of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono reaffirmed Indonesia's commitment to the United Nations and its support for ESCAP as the secretariat of the Governments of the Asian and Pacific region. That support was particularly valued at a time when the entire United Nations system, including ESCAP and the other four regional commissions, was engaged in serious reform to adapt to the challenges of the twenty-first century and to address more effectively and efficiently the priorities of Member States.

Inaugural address by the President of Indonesia

32. On behalf of the people of Indonesia, the President extended his warmest welcome to all those attending the session and acknowledged with pleasure the presence of Pacific leaders.

33. The President underscored the global pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals as the greatest project on which humanity had ever embarked, one that was more ambitious than the struggle for freedom that had defined the twentieth century.

34. The quest for the Millennium Development Goals was an ambitious struggle to spread opportunity and hope more evenly throughout humanity, with concrete practical objectives, and with a clear timetable. Resources to achieve the Goals were available, provided there was sustained political will and a strategy for allocating the necessary resources.

35. The key to progress was in good governance which, if employed well, would resolve national problems, harness potential and turn weakness into strength.

36. The President observed that globalization had brought with it the need to intensify the cooperation and partnership networks at the subregional, regional and interregional levels. Furthermore, while many felt left

out by globalization, some found opportunities and tools of empowerment to bring about a more level playing field. Information and communication technology, for example, could revolutionize education, redefine the life of the individual and empower communities. The President believed that, if the twentieth century had been an era of big ideas, such as nationalism, capitalism, socialism and industrialization, the twenty-first century was an era during which change would be propelled by small gadgets. The President expressed the hope that ESCAP could play a role in helping Governments and citizens to harness the powerful force of globalization gracefully and intelligently.

37. The President expressed the view that Asia and the Pacific also needed to address an important emerging social issue of the times: tolerance. That issue was linked to current conflicts, most of which were internal conflicts related to ethnicity or religion or both. Economic marginalization, social dislocation, globalization, religious orthodoxy and narrow nationalism were factors that would add greater urgency to the promotion of tolerance. The President held the view that "development" in the twenty-first century was not just about poverty alleviation or about protecting the environment and sustainability, but it was also about building tolerance. The President suggested that ESCAP could help communities in the region to achieve the kind of social progress that could make them bastions of resilience and tolerance, in which diversity was celebrated as a source of strength and dynamism.

38. Yet the region was vulnerable to natural disasters; the death toll wrought by the December 2004 tsunami included over 200,000 people in Aceh and Nias, Indonesia. The President, in informing the Commission that the devastated communities were experiencing a rebirth, expressed the hope that the historic peace accord that had been made in Aceh would permanently end a conflict that had lasted 30 years. Given the significance of the tsunami, there was a need to intensify regional collaboration on disaster management.

39. Citing the historical and cultural links of Indonesia with the Pacific, the President stated that the country was linked to the Pacific in many positive ways and was well positioned to serve as the Pacific's gateway to Asia. Indonesia was a founding member of the South-West Pacific Dialogue and was actively involved in the Pacific Islands Forum as a dialogue partner. By collaborating in the promotion of economic growth, sustainable development, good governance and security, all of which were important pillars of the Pacific Plan for Strengthening Regional Cooperation and Integration adopted by the Forum in October 2005, ESCAP members and the Pacific island nations could strengthen regional cooperation to manage globalization. Indonesia could share with the Pacific islands its experiences in fields such as microfinance, human resources development and agriculture. The President highlighted areas in which Asian and Pacific partnership could be most useful. Those areas included capacity development, trade and investment, fulfilment of long-standing international commitments, gender integration in micro, small and medium-sized enterprises.

40. The President proposed that ESCAP regional advisory services and regional subsidiary bodies give particular attention to small islands and the challenges that they faced; concrete action was needed, as was the pooling of resources.

Policy issues for the ESCAP region

Policy statement by the Executive Secretary

41. The Executive Secretary observed that, despite numerous challenges, a major earthquake in South Asia and a slowdown in the global economy, the Asian and Pacific region had achieved an average GDP growth rate of over 6 per cent in 2005 and had maintained macroeconomic stability. The Executive Secretary emphasized, however, that the region continued to face major challenges.

42. Short-term risks included still higher energy prices, the possibility of global current account imbalances unwinding suddenly, higher interest rates, disruptive exchange rate adjustments and the threat of avian influenza. Addressing such challenges would require the formulation of effective policies at the national level and enhanced cooperation at the regional level.

43. The Executive Secretary noted that it was also important not to lose sight of the longer-term challenges of poverty reduction and achieving the Millennium Development Goals, within a framework for sustainable development, which had to be the overriding priority of all Governments' policies.

44. Other challenges to be addressed included rising inequality, high levels of youth unemployment and child labour. Sustaining the current high momentum of GDP growth was important, but growth alone would not be able to solve those problems.

45. The Executive Secretary observed that long-term development required much more investment in infrastructure, such as transport, energy, water and sanitation, and ICT. In that context, the theme study for 2006 on enhancing regional cooperation in infrastructure development addressed some of those issues and pointed to the importance of regional cooperation in infrastructure development.

46. With regard to the challenge of infrastructure development, the Executive Secretary expressed the hope that the Ministerial Round Table on Enhancing Regional Cooperation in Infrastructure Development, including that Related to Disaster Management, would deliberate on ways forward for creating an intergovernmental process to review the options.

47. The Executive Secretary observed that the region's economic dynamism had also adversely affected the environment. The importance of environmental sustainability, within a viable strategy for long-term development, had been neglected by industry and the public sector, and had remained essentially unknown to the general public. Environmental policies would remain difficult to implement without creating greater public awareness and gaining public support.

48. The Executive Secretary also observed that the Asian and Pacific region had historically been a particularly disaster-prone part of the world and that natural disasters had created major challenges in the management of vital public resources such as water. The investment of resources in disaster preparedness and management was the key to reducing the human suffering that natural disasters brought in their wake. In addition, for long-term development, it was vital to have a sustainable mix of energy sources with less reliance on fossil fuels.

49. The Executive Secretary noted that the conclusion of the Sixth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization, held in Hong Kong, China, in December 2005, had been disappointing in some respects. The view of the Executive Secretary was that, although the Doha Development Agenda was broadly back on track, important issues remained outstanding.

50. The Executive Secretary also noted that many countries in the region had enhanced their efforts to address emerging social issues, with a view to promoting more inclusive development and the social integration of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. The social policy aspects of cross-border migration were matters of increasing concern in the region. Furthermore, the Executive Secretary noted with concern that the AIDS epidemic in the region had continued to spread. Those challenges were serious and the region would need to be much more actively engaged in regional and global dialogue and consultative processes so that Governments could address the issues in a meaningful manner.

51. In concluding, the Executive Secretary emphasized the importance of the year 2006 in the context of the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. He emphasized that, in the years ahead, the people of the region would eventually pass judgement based on hard evidence concerning how much their lives had improved, and that a new sense of urgency should be given to the realization of the development goals contained in the Millennium Declaration.

Implications of recent economic and social developments

52. The Commission had before it the document entitled "Report on the current economic situation in the region and related policy issues" (E/ESCAP/1360) and the *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2006* (ST/ESCAP/2396).

53. The Commission expressed appreciation of the excellent work done by the secretariat in preparing the documentation. The crucial role of the secretariat was acknowledged with regard to monitoring and analysing developments in the global economy, assessing their impact on the ESCAP region and providing essential guidance for the macroeconomic policies of member States.

54. The Commission noted that the region had continued to enjoy robust economic growth in 2005, although high and unstable oil prices, increasing current account imbalances, the slow growth of global trade and the threat of an avian influenza pandemic had adversely affected business activity. The good prospects of the Asian and Pacific region for development were cited along with the need for awareness of the challenges that the region faced. In that regard, poverty, inequality and environmental decay were major challenges for the region. The challenges of development affected, in particular, the least developed countries and Pacific island countries.

55. The Commission stated that poverty was the main obstacle to sustainable development, but noted that Governments in the region were committed to reducing poverty. In that respect, the Millennium Development Goals guided efforts to tackle major problems associated with poverty reduction and facilitated equitable and sustainable development. However, a major challenge in some countries was raising the investment rate, which was necessary for achieving higher economic growth. A number of factors discouraged such investment, including an insufficient and unreliable supply of electricity and gas, poor transport networks and inadequate telecommunication services.

56. It was recognized that achieving the Millennium Development Goals required an effective long-term strategy that included pro-poor economic growth, faster human development through education, health, nutrition and other social interventions, gender mainstreaming, social safety nets for the poor and participatory governance aimed at enhancing the voice of the poor. One delegation emphasized the importance of migration and remittances in economic development and poverty reduction, and the need to deal with the challenges and opportunities that migration presented to countries of origin, destination and transit.

57. Attention was drawn to the lack of reliable official data, which hampered the monitoring of economic, social and environmental development, especially in small island States and the least developed countries. A few Pacific island developing countries shared a specific concern about the quality of data that were used to determine their status as least developed countries. Those delegations requested the secretariat to continue to provide assistance in improving statistical capacity, data accuracy and statistical information

systems in the Pacific. One delegation requested the secretariat to provide technical assistance in conducting a cost-benefit analysis of its possible graduation from least developed country status.

58. An immediate problem that the region faced concerned issues of unemployment and underemployment. Globalization and the economic emergence of China and India had changed the economic situation and prospects of the region, while ICT had changed the speed and spread of information flows. Those developments made an impact on the competitiveness of open economies in the region. Thus, measures were needed to improve the functioning of labour markets, improve productivity and ensure that the workforce was provided with the relevant skills to succeed in today's rapidly changing global economy.

59. The Commission noted that unemployment posed a major challenge for the region, and urged the secretariat to continue its efforts in building capacity in the region to address unemployment and other emerging social issues. It noted the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme of India, which was designed to reduce unemployment and provide rural infrastructure.

60. It was emphasized that trade and investment and open economies were essential for ensuring economic growth and sustainable development. Support was expressed for the continuation of the secretariat's technical assistance in that area. Commitment to the multilateral trading system and to the completion of the Doha negotiations, as set out in the Ministerial Declaration adopted by the Sixth WTO Ministerial Conference, held in Hong Kong, China, from 13 to 18 December 2005, was reiterated by two delegations.

61. Many delegations requested the secretariat to accord priority to regional policy dialogues and other capacity-building programmes, in collaboration with global and regional partners, on WTO accession issues, to enable developing countries and countries with economies in transition to participate more effectively in multilateral trade negotiations.

62. Two delegations noted that more precise, effective and operational special and differential treatment constituted an integral part of the outcome of current and future multilateral trade negotiations. They underlined the importance of concepts such as special products and special safeguard mechanisms. Another two delegations noted that some developing countries had experienced market access difficulties, such as the erosion of trade preferences and restrictive rules of origin.

63. The Commission called for strong commitment by the member countries to strengthening social infrastructure as one of the pillars of development and to increasing resources for education, health and basic social services. It also called for enhanced efforts to empower vulnerable groups, including children, the elderly and persons with disabilities, and for the mainstreaming of gender considerations.

64. The Commission recognized the threat to the economies in the region posed by avian influenza and underlined the importance of preparedness and the need for urgency in that regard. It recommended the improvement of health facilities and laboratories, and capacity-building to address health-related challenges. It noted that international and regional cooperation in more rapid diagnosis, prevention and treatment was vital in decreasing the danger of pandemics.

65. Several countries had been affected by natural disasters such as the tsunami in the Indian Ocean and the earthquake in South Asia. However, strong relief measures taken by the countries concerned, aided by the international community, had gone a considerable way in relieving immediate suffering.

66. The Commission thanked the secretariat for organizing the Pacific Leaders' United Nations ESCAP Special Session (PLUS) for the first time in the history of ESCAP. It expressed its appreciation to the Government of Indonesia for hosting PLUS, which provided an opportunity for the Pacific island developing States to highlight their development needs. It welcomed the suggestion that progress in that subregion could be achieved through a strengthened Pacific-Asian partnership.

67. The wealth of experience of ESCAP in economic and social development was noted, as was the desirability of utilizing its strong capabilities in organization and coordination for pooling information and expertise, conducting policy research and promoting cooperation in diverse areas. It looked to the secretariat for further guidance and assistance in forming regional partnerships for development.

68. The Commission was informed of various trade and investment-promotion initiatives, such as the Development Initiative for Trade of Japan and the proposed Thailand-Pacific Islands Forum Plan, and various initiatives to accord duty- and quota-free market access for exports from least developed countries.

69. The delegation of Mongolia informed the Commission of the intention of its Government to host a trade ministers' conference of landlocked developing country members of WTO in Ulaanbaatar in mid-2007. Furthermore, the delegation of India informed the Commission that its Government would host the first Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Human Settlements in New Delhi from 3 to 10 November 2006. Both delegations looked forward to high-level participation in the respective conferences.

70. One delegation expressed its willingness to support the establishment of an integrated trans-Asian energy system aimed at safeguarding the supply of energy resources to final consumers within the region. Another delegation reiterated its support for the cooperation between ESCAP and the Mekong River riparian countries through the Decade of Greater Mekong Subregion Development Cooperation, 2000-2009, and noted that that initiative had contributed to

strengthening relations and cooperation among the countries of the Greater Mekong Subregion.

71. The Commission expressed its appreciation of and support for the Asia-Pacific Business Forum 2006, which had been organized jointly by ESCAP, the Government of Indonesia and the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce as a side event at the sixty-second session of the Commission. It noted that the Forum was important for building and strengthening public-private partnerships. Several delegations expressed appreciation of the role of the Forum in strengthening business links and improving national and interregional regulatory oversight to secure long-term sustainable growth.

Strengthening Pacific island developing countries and territories through regional cooperation and the Pacific Leaders' United Nations ESCAP Special Session

72. The Commission had before it the document entitled "Policy issues for the ESCAP region: strengthening Pacific island developing countries and territories through regional cooperation" (E/ESCAP/1361).

73. The Pacific Leaders' United Nations ESCAP Special Session (PLUS) was a unique opportunity for Pacific voices to be raised in the annual session of the Commission. Among the participating dignitaries from the Pacific were the Presidents of the Marshall Islands and Kiribati, the Prime Minister of Tuvalu, the Vice-Presidents of the Federated States of Micronesia, and of Palau, the Deputy Prime Minister of Vanuatu, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade of Fiji, the Minister for Trade and Industry of Papua New Guinea and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nauru. Senior officials representing Samoa, Solomon Islands and Tonga also attended, together with other delegations.

74. The Commission expressed its appreciation to the Government of Indonesia for hosting the sixty-second session of the Commission and PLUS. It noted the call by the President of Indonesia for ESCAP and other regional bodies to focus on addressing the concerns of the Pacific small island developing States and his wish to see Indonesia share with those States experiences in such fields as microfinance, human resources development and agriculture.

75. Many delegations thanked the secretariat for organizing PLUS, the first in the history of ESCAP. Appreciation was expressed for the participation of Pacific island leaders and the cooperation of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and UNDP in the organization of PLUS, which provided Pacific small island developing States with the opportunity to highlight their development needs.

76. It was noted that the objective of PLUS was to contribute to addressing the development challenges of the Pacific islands; the suggestion that that might be achieved through enhanced and strengthened Pacific-Asian cooperation was welcomed.

77. The Commission welcomed the Pacific Plan for Strengthening Regional Cooperation and Integration, endorsed by the leaders of all the Pacific island countries at the Pacific Islands Forum meeting, held in Port Moresby in October 2005, as the basis for strengthening regional cooperation and integration. It noted that the Plan, which highlighted the importance of partnership within the Asian and Pacific region, would address many of the concerns of the Pacific island countries, such as promoting economic growth, sustainable development, good governance and security. Several members of the Commission expressed their willingness to support the implementation of the Plan.

Economic growth, employment and sustainable development

78. The overwhelming development challenges faced by Pacific small island developing States included low economic growth, rising unemployment, the increasing incidence and extent of poverty, fragile environments and limited natural resources. The physical smallness and the fragmented and isolated nature of those island countries and their extreme vulnerability to changing climate conditions were also seen as major constraints on their efforts to develop.

79. The Commission noted the success of Asian countries in achieving high and sustained economic growth in the preceding decade. Pacific small island developing States expressed admiration for that achievement and hoped that the experience of Asian countries could be shared to benefit them.

80. Many of those States were vulnerable since they were low-lying atolls or were located in cyclone-prone areas. Economic activity in those countries was affected by seasonal changes and by natural disasters. The importance of cooperation in disaster risk management to address the impact of climate change and rising sea levels in those countries was emphasized.

81. Given the small population of Pacific island countries, their human and institutional capacity needed to be strengthened so that they could address the challenges facing them. Noting the decline in some of their social indicators, the need for greater investment, especially in the areas of education and health, was recognized.

82. Fisheries were a significant resource for Pacific small island developing States, worth over $2 billion a year, from which those countries, as the resource owners, received only between 5 and 8 per cent. The Pacific tuna stocks were the last major resource of that species remaining in the world and it was important for all stakeholders to work closely together to ensure the sustainability of the stocks.

83. The Commission noted that, given the vulnerability of Pacific small island developing States to oil shocks, closer collaboration was needed between

them and Asian countries on renewable energy development, especially solar and wave energy.

84. The Commission noted the concern expressed by Pacific small island developing States over the critical need for balanced development. In particular, it noted their concern that increasing population placed pressure on the available natural resources. Prudent management measures, both national and subregional, were essential in order to conserve the environment, preserve biodiversity and ensure sustainable development for the benefit of future generations.

Economic infrastructure and ICT

85. Regional cooperation could be an effective modality for meeting increased infrastructure requirements in transport, energy and ICST. The Commission was urged to consider implementing innovative investment incentives to channel surplus reserves from Asia into Pacific small island developing States for infrastructure development.

86. Attainment of the information society, as outlined in the Geneva Declaration of Principles and the Geneva Plan of Action of the World Summit on the Information Society, by Pacific small island developing States required assessment of their ICST policies and the possible establishment of improved satellite communication infrastructure in the framework of the Pacific Regional Digital Strategy.

Trade, investment and tourism

87. The Commission noted that the cost of doing business in Pacific small island developing States was high. Despite that, many of those countries had put in place measures to attract foreign investment into their manufacturing sector, especially in downstream processing. Political stability combined with institutional reform and good governance had contributed positively to the business environment in some countries. The importance of public-private sector partnership was also highlighted.

88. Tourism was one of the areas where Pacific small island developing States had an advantage. The attractiveness of tourism for those countries was that it was labour-intensive and could generate wider benefits in the rest of their economies. Asian investment was beginning to flow into the tourism sector in many of the countries and they looked forward to more investment and tourists from Asia.

Responses

89. Strengthened collaboration between Pacific small island developing States and their counterparts in Asia was encouraged. The important role that bodies such as development agencies, financial institutions, private-sector organizations, non-governmental organizations and donors could play in that process was noted.

90. The Commission expressed its appreciation to the Governments of Australia, China, Indonesia, Japan and Thailand for their continuing and enhanced support, including technical assistance, to Pacific small island developing States. It noted the offer of the Government of Thailand to provide training in sustainable crop production, tourism management, community-based microfinance and income-generation for poverty alleviation, SME development and HIV/AIDS management.

91. Development partners were called upon to give greater focus to Pacific small island developing States in their cooperation programmes and to use South-South cooperation programmes in the delivery of technical and economic cooperation activities. Areas of South-South cooperation could include economic growth; employment and sustainable development; economic infrastructure, including ICT and renewable energy; and trade, investment and tourism.

92. The importance of "thinking small" in pursuing those cooperation activities, in order to be relevant to the needs of Pacific small island developing States, and the need to preserve their integrity and culture were emphasized. The Commission noted the concern expressed by those countries about ensuring genuine partnerships which benefited all.

93. Appreciation was expressed to the secretariat for promoting dialogue and partnership, and the secretariat was requested to play a leading role in coordinating technical assistance activities.

Enhancing regional cooperation in infrastructure development, including that related to disaster management

94. The Commission had before it the document entitled "Enhancing regional cooperation in infrastructure development, including that related to disaster management" (E/ESCAP/1362), which was the theme of the sixty-second session. It recognized that that theme was most relevant and timely.

95. The Commission noted that adequate infrastructure was a prerequisite for sustainable economic growth, as it provided access to global trade and investment flows and played a critical role in reducing poverty, increasing living standards and supporting the effective implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. Poor infrastructure not only hindered economic development, but also affected other areas, such as disaster recovery and social development. One delegation called for the promotion of "infrastructure for all", whereby all people including the poor would benefit.

96. The Commission noted that enhancing international and regional cooperation could be an important impetus for infrastructure development in the region. One delegation proposed the use of regional cooperation platforms to discuss and review policy options and promote successful models for the planning, development and management of infrastructure. In that context, it suggested that developing countries could

benefit from the experiences of developed countries. It also encouraged the secretariat to carry out more policy research and promote practical cooperation for progress in infrastructure.

97. The Commission noted that regional cooperation in infrastructure development must have the aims of economic progress and poverty reduction, based on the principles of sustainable development.

98. The importance of the secretariat's work in creating a seamless intermodal transport network equipped with state-of-the-art information and communication technologies was reiterated. The secretariat's work on the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway, as well as cross-border and transit facilitation, was commended. The Commission noted that the secretariat needed to promote the interoperability, interconnectivity and intermodality of transport infrastructure, including that related to archipelagic countries.

99. One delegation expressed the view that cross-border infrastructure development had huge potential benefits for the Asian and Pacific region. Two delegations held the view that development assistance provided by member States to facilitate regional cooperation for economic and social development should include infrastructure development.

100. Many delegations recognized that the public sector played a key role in formulating and enforcing policies and laws, while the private sector had experience in market operation, as well as rich expertise and professionals who were eager to be involved in infrastructure development.

101. A number of delegations indicated their role in providing access to and transit through neighbouring countries, underscoring the possibility of turning the disadvantage of being landlocked into the advantage of being land-linked hubs. The Commission noted that one landlocked country was striving to achieve that through cooperation with neighbouring countries in the development of transport infrastructure. That could create east-west and north-south routes for regional trade and economic corridors.

102. The Commission noted that, although countries were incorporating ICST into national development plans, the digital divide continued to widen. Urgent attention needed to be given to the significant gaps that remained between countries and within countries in terms of access to, and use of, such technologies. To carry out practical cooperation for greater hardware interconnectivity and better supportive software for business operation, management and streamlined customs procedures, the secretariat was requested to establish an intraregional network to achieve economies of scale.

103. The Commission requested that the secretariat strengthen national capacity in ICST, including the development of human resources. In that respect, it noted the announcement of the Republic of Korea that the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (APCICT) would be fully operational in June 2006. It also noted with appreciation the technical cooperation activities of India in Pacific island countries for the development of ICT, in partnership with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat.

104. The Commission recognized that the region was prone to natural disasters, resulting in extensive damage to property and loss of life, and agreed that establishment of the relevant disaster management infrastructure was a major and urgent requirement towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. It noted that disasters were often cross-boundary in nature and that most countries in the region lacked the necessary technical and financial capability to develop infrastructure for disaster preparedness. The importance of early warning, emergency rescue, recovery and relief operations was stressed.

105. The Commission emphasized that national efforts therefore needed to be supported by regional cooperation, with ESCAP playing a catalytic and coordinating role in the development of regional cooperation mechanisms to respond effectively to major disasters.

106. The Commission noted the particular concern of the Pacific island developing countries over rising sea levels, caused by climate change. One delegation encouraged greater cooperation in exploring measures for economic growth that would not compromise environmental sustainability.

107. The Commission noted that the geographical isolation of island developing countries intensified their need to have in place adequate and appropriate transport, information and communications systems to enable them to realize significant progress in development.

108. The Commission noted with appreciation the contribution of $10 million from Thailand as seed money towards the establishment of the Multi-Donor Voluntary Trust Fund on Tsunami Early Warning Arrangements in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia, administered by ESCAP, and encouraged other member States to make contributions. The Commission noted that the international community had reacted to major disasters quickly with the aim of assisting the victims, but it recognized that such responses had to be coordinated to ensure effectiveness.

109. The Commission noted the offers of Japan and the Republic of Korea to share their experience and expertise in disaster preparedness, recovery and management. The Commission also noted a proposal by the Islamic Republic of Iran to provide $10 million within five years for the establishment and operation of an Asian and Pacific ICST-enabled disaster management centre, affiliated with ESCAP. The same delegation requested the secretariat to conduct a study on the proposed centre.

110. One delegation observed that there were many initiatives and regional centres dealing with the prevention and management of natural disasters. One delegation requested that the secretariat conduct a study to identify the requirements of the region and streamline those activities. Another delegation noted the efforts made towards natural disaster management and expressed the view that such efforts were most efficient and effective when administered by and through existing institutions.

111. Noting the growing water scarcity in Asia and the Pacific, the Commission underlined the important work of the secretariat in strengthening regional and subregional cooperation to develop infrastructure for water resources management and conservation. It stressed that it was important for the secretariat to continue to promote efficiency in water use and water services, and improvements in water productivity and conservation through public-private partnerships.

112. The Commission noted that the development of water-related infrastructure aimed at improving access to safe drinking water and sanitation constituted a basis for sustainable development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The important role of the secretariat in promoting water-related infrastructure in transboundary river basins was highlighted.

113. The Commission noted the importance of energy infrastructure development as a basis for sustainable development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. In that context, one delegation underscored the need to pursue infrastructure development policies in an environmentally sustainable manner.

114. The Commission expressed its concern over the recent increases in oil prices and noted the need to promote regional cooperation in infrastructure development to enhance energy security. It noted a proposal to develop a regional mechanism for cooperation to improve planning and coordination, which could lead to an integrated trans-Asian energy system, aimed at safeguarding the supply of energy to final consumption destinations within the region.

115. The Commission also recognized the role that ESCAP could play in the promotion of regional cooperation and exchanging experiences to promote energy cooperation with private sector participation in order to enhance energy security. One delegation requested that the secretariat take the necessary measures, including preliminary studies, with a view to facilitating the formation of such a system.

116. The Commission noted that financing was a critical component of infrastructure development and that the secretariat estimated the annual financial gap to be at least $180 billion. It also noted that, because financing of infrastructure development was beyond the capacity of most national economies, it was necessary to seek innovative financial instruments and institutional arrangements.

117. The need to explore regional financial support mechanisms to accelerate the development of regional infrastructure projects was noted. In that regard, the secretariat was requested to conduct a study that would cover all practical options through which regional cooperation could help to invest surplus savings in the region for infrastructure development. Such options could include an expansion of the mandate and scope of the Asian Bond Fund in favour of infrastructure investment.

118. The Commission acknowledged the contributions of development partners and multilateral agencies, such as the World Bank, IMF and ADB. However, one delegation mentioned that it was time to start a discussion on the structure that needed in order to be established in order to bridge the gap between investment needs and actual flows.

119. It was noted that Asia accounted for 70 per cent of global foreign exchange reserves, which far exceeded what was required in order to pay creditors and dispel currency speculation. Attention was drawn to the opportunity cost of holding reserves when there was ample scope for domestic investment in sectors such as infrastructure in the region. In that regard, the Commission noted that India had commissioned a study to examine all possible options for financing infrastructure, including the strengthening of existing institutions.

120. The Commission observed that innovative approaches to infrastructure development had to be formulated, with a view to encouraging private investment in that area. In that regard, the Commission heard a view that the creation of a specific financial institution, such as an Asian investment bank that focused on infrastructure development, would help to promote investment from the private sector in infrastructure, which had long been regarded as a State or public area of investment. The Commission also noted the view that a cautious approach should be taken to the idea of establishing a new institution, such as an Asian investment bank, as it duplicated the activities of existing institutions, such as the Asian Development Bank.

121. The Commission noted the proposal by several delegations to establish an intergovernmental task force drawn from States members of ESCAP to examine ways and means of increasing the capacity of the region for timely and increased funding to meet its infrastructure needs. Some delegations, however, held the view that the establishment of such a task force would be premature. In the area of financial resources, ADB had played a substantial role and the suggestion was made that the existing institutions be strengthened.

122. The Commission noted that infrastructure problems went beyond mere funding. It was equally important to make the right policies and create an enabling environment for financial markets to invest in infrastructure effectively, and to ensure that regulatory

frameworks did not impede market signals. It noted that good governance was the key to creating a conducive environment for infrastructure development. That included transparent legal frameworks, the establishment and use of appropriate systems of public procurement, based on transparency and competition, objective and predetermined criteria in decision-making, and the adoption of measures that were effective in preventing corruption.

123. The Commission adopted resolution 62/2 on the Jakarta Declaration on Enhancing Regional Cooperation in Infrastructure Development, including that Related to Disaster Management.

Implementation of the Jakarta Declaration on Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific: the Way Forward 2015

124. The Commission had before it the document entitled "Implementation of the Jakarta Declaration on Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific: the Way Forward 2015" (E/ESCAP/1363).

125. The introductory statement of the Chairperson highlighted the key commitments and recommendations contained in the Jakarta Declaration and emphasized the need for the developed countries to fulfil their obligations to establish a genuine and mutually beneficial partnership for development. The Chairperson emphasized that the challenge for member countries lay in their moving forward to translate the commitments into concrete and viable action to fulfil the Millennium Development Goals. In that regard, the need for a road map to provide members and associate members with guidelines on key actions and modalities to address gaps in meeting their targets under the Goals by the year 2015 was underscored. Such a road map would include provisions for the mobilization of resources for effective implementation of the Goals, and mechanisms by which the secretariat would undertake periodic reviews of the progress towards achieving the Goals. The importance of the active participation of all stakeholders in the region to generate a strong sense of ownership of the Goals was also emphasized.

126. The introductory statement of the Executive Secretary referred to the request contained in the Jakarta Declaration for the Commission to include an item in the provisional agenda of its sixty-second session on the modalities for regional implementation of the Declaration, including the formulation of a plan of action which would serve as a road map to move forward to 2015. The proposals in the note by the secretariat were intended to provide a basis for deliberations by the Commission on that subject.

127. The Commission expressed appreciation to the Government of Indonesia for having hosted in August 2005 the Regional Ministerial Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific: the Way Forward 2015, and for its role in promoting high-level engagement among Governments and other stakeholders in support of the implementation of the Goals.

128. The Commission noted the strong political commitment of Governments to the Millennium Development Goals and, in that regard, recognized the importance of the Jakarta Declaration in furthering national and regional efforts towards the achievement of the Goals. One delegation emphasized the need to formulate a road map with a workable set of guidelines to implement the Jakarta Declaration. The need to commit adequate resources, ensure the participation of all stakeholders and undertake periodic regional reviews of the implementation of the Jakarta Declaration was also emphasized.

129. The Commission noted the efforts of some Governments to integrate the Millennium Development Goals into their national development strategies and their adoption of poverty reduction as an overarching national development policy. One delegation emphasized the importance of giving priority to poverty reduction in national development plans and of assessing the cost of achieving the Goals as the basis for a financing plan. Another delegation reported that its Government had set poverty reduction targets that were more ambitious than the Goals. One delegation reported that its Government had started formulating a Goal-based national development strategy and established working groups to conduct needs assessments for individual Goals. The same delegation noted that progress had been made so far in some Goals concerning education, gender and reducing child and maternal mortality. However, there were enormous obstacles in reducing poverty by half and ensuring environmental sustainability by 2015.

130. Some delegations noted the considerable challenges facing the region in sustaining the progress made thus far, particularly in addressing inequalities in the distribution of income, the pockets of extreme poverty within countries and the sheer number of poor people in the region (two thirds of the world's poor). One delegation expressed concern over the slow progress in some areas of the Millennium Development Goals and the need to take urgent action to promote sustainable development. The Commission stressed that those challenges must be addressed and tackled through cooperation and partnership among countries, as highlighted in the Jakarta Declaration.

131. It was proposed by one delegation that partnership and cooperation be focused on four areas: (a) enhancing efforts to create multilateral and regional trading systems that were transparent, rule-based, predictable as well as non-discriminatory in accordance with Millennium Development Goal 8; (b) strengthening international cooperation to identify and develop additional and innovative sources of financing for development on a public, private, domestic or external basis, in order to increase and supplement traditional sources of financing, including debt-for-MDGs swaps, public-private partnerships and microfinancing; (c) fulfilling the commitments made by

the developed countries to allocate 0.7 per cent of GNP for ODA; and (d) enhancing regional cooperation to achieve greater aid effectiveness by exchanging information on good practices in order to better align development assistance with national development plans and to harmonize development assistance to achieve optimum results in accordance with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness: Ownership, Harmonization, Alignment, Results and Mutual Accountability.

132. The Commission underscored the need for developed countries to fulfil their ODA commitments. In that context, the delegation of Japan drew the attention of the Commission to the commitment made by its Government at the 2005 World Summit to increase its ODA by $10 billion over the next five years and the importance it placed on the improvement of health as a key component of development. In that context, the Government of Japan was taking the lead in addressing infectious diseases at the regional level with its hosting of the G-8 Kyushu-Okinawa Summit in July 2000, its contribution of $350 million to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and its pledge made in March 2006 of another $500 million.

133. The delegation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland announced that the United Kingdom Department for International Development would increase its bilateral programme for Asia by approximately 25 per cent from 2004 to 2008 and that that trend was expected to continue thereafter as the country moved towards the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income by 2013.

134. One delegation, while recognizing the importance of enhanced financial resources for development, stressed that the Millennium Development Goals could not be realized only through aid. Other factors, such as trade, infrastructure development, capacity-building and the transfer of appropriate technology to developing countries, were also necessary to achieve the Goals. In that context, the delegation underscored the need to integrate development aid with the national development strategies of recipient countries, promote good governance and combat corruption. The delegation also emphasized the need for institutional reforms, not only in developing countries but also in the international economic and monetary institutions. Reforms in debt relief, success of the Doha round and good governance, not only at the domestic level but also in the international framework, were emphasized as crucial elements in achieving the Goals.

135. The Commission stressed the importance of sustained economic growth for poverty reduction and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It also emphasized that the pursuit of economic growth needed to be coupled with socially oriented government interventions in order to improve the lives of the poor and reduce income disparity between urban and rural areas, as well as between and within ethnic groups.

136. The Commission noted the importance of trade as a key element for economic growth. In that regard, it emphasized enhancing market access for developing country exports, liberalizing the service sector, facilitating regional trade that would benefit the region, strengthening supply-side economies, developing infrastructure in support of export-oriented policies and addressing the growing trend towards protectionism in some developed countries. One delegation pointed out the need for duty-free and quota-free market access by developing countries to developed country markets as an important measure to support the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

137. Another delegation stressed the importance of agriculture to the developing countries. In that regard, trade negotiations should take into account the food and livelihood security of the large number of marginal subsistence farmers and the need for developed countries to remove trade-distorting subsidies in agriculture. Another delegation emphasized the need to strengthen domestic economies, particularly by supporting micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and promoting microfinance.

138. One delegation pointed out that section III (A), on action at the international level, proposed in the note by the secretariat (E/ESCAP/1363), went beyond the mandate of paragraph 43 of the Jakarta Declaration, which called for the Commission at the current session to consider an action plan for regional implementation of the Declaration.

139. With respect to a possible Asia-Pacific convention on the elimination of corruption, mentioned in paragraph 38 in section III (B), on action at the regional level, the same delegation cautioned that any new convention should be complementary to, and not a replacement of, the United Nations Convention against Corruption. Further, the important role of the Economic Cooperation Organization in promoting regional cooperation was pointed out. With regard to the proposal for regional monetary cooperation in the note by the secretariat, it was also pointed out in the discussion that the Islamic Development Bank could play a role in that area.

140. One delegation suggested revising the first sentence of paragraph 30 of the note by the secretariat to "There is a need to consider additional measures aimed at ensuring long-term debt sustainability" in accordance with paragraph 26 (c) of the 2005 World Summit Outcome document. In addition, in the second sentence of the same paragraph, the delegation suggested adding the phrase "where appropriate, and on a case-by-case basis", before the words "to consider", for the same reason as that mentioned above.

141. The Commission expressed appreciation to the secretariat for its support to members and associate members in fulfilling their Millennium Development Goal commitments. It stressed the need for the secretariat to undertake periodic analysis and review of

regional progress towards achieving the Goals, statistical capacity-building for improving the quality of data for monitoring progress towards achieving the Goals, policy dialogue and the exchange of good practices. One delegation requested that the secretariat consider innovative schemes for achieving the Goals, particularly the utilization of debt-for-equity swaps in order to generate resources for development in the poorest areas. Another delegation suggested that the secretariat could initiate quick-win initiatives, as articulated in the 2005 World Summit Outcome document.

142. The representative of UNDP reported on the tripartite partnership between UNDP, ESCAP and ADB in providing a unique platform to support the member countries in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and in producing regional reports that provided the basis for developing policies and identifying actions required for the region to meet the Goals. The representative announced a demand-driven regional programme recently developed by UNDP to support national strategies and plans based on the Goals. The representative also reported that pilot work had commenced in four countries in 2006 and six more countries would be supported in 2007.

143. In view of the priority accorded by Governments to achieving the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific, the delegation of Japan informed the Commission that its Government had submitted a draft resolution entitled "Implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific" for adoption at the current session and expressed the hope that the resolution would receive support from other delegations.

144. The Commission adopted resolution 62/1 on achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the ESCAP region.

Key developments and activities at the regional level

Poverty reduction

Key issues relating to poverty reduction

145. The Commission had before it the documents entitled "Report of the Committee on Poverty Reduction on its second session" (E/ESCAP/1364), "Summary of progress in the implementation of resolutions relating to the theme of poverty reduction" (E/ESCAP/1364/Add.1) and "Confronting poverty in Asia and the Pacific" (E/ESCAP/1365 and Corr.1). It expressed appreciation to the secretariat for the very informative and valuable documentation.

146. The Commission noted that two thirds of the world's poor lived in the Asian and Pacific region, which heightened the importance for the region of poverty reduction and of achieving the Millennium Development Goals. It acknowledged that, while many countries in the region were experiencing rapid economic growth, there was also evidence of growing disparities between countries in the region, between rural and urban areas within countries and between different population groups. Delegations also drew the attention of the Commission to the fact that economic growth and development often did not reach remote parts of a country, such as small islands and border areas.

147. The Commission recognized that economic growth was essential for poverty reduction, but that pro-poor economic growth with distribution policies and targeted programmes was required to ensure that the benefits of economic growth reached all population groups. Several delegations recounted their experiences with programmes that targeted populations in remote areas and small islands, as well as ethnic minorities. It was observed that it was necessary to bring essential services, such as health care and education, water supply and roads, to the rural areas and to ensure that the rural population had access to those services, if necessary through subsidies.

148. The Commission recognized that the public sector alone could not meet the enormous demand for services and that poverty reduction required partnerships between the public sector and the private sector, between both those sectors and communities of the poor and between the public sector and civil society. Examples mentioned included public-private partnerships in the extension of credit for the poor and in the delivery of health care and education.

149. A number of delegations noted the strong potential linkages between growth in the agricultural sector and poverty reduction in the rural areas. The impact depended, however, on the extent to which government, donors, civil society and other key stakeholders were able to collaborate to target support better for small farmers. In that respect, important issues for small farmers included securing land tenure and gaining access to natural resources, effective water management, removing barriers to efficient marketing, and the availability of affordable credit.

150. The Commission noted the social problems that were created by disparities between urban and rural areas and between different parts of a country. Because of the many opportunities in urban areas, people with better education in the rural areas moved to the city, leaving behind older people and people with less education. Consequently, urban areas were developing, while some rural areas were decaying. The Commission also observed a process of feminization of agriculture, whereby the role of women in agriculture increased as men moved to the urban areas.

151. One delegation mentioned the close link between poverty and vulnerability, and informed the Commission that, as the population of its country was dispersed over numerous islands, it was extremely vulnerable to natural disasters such as tsunamis. Protecting the dispersed population and providing

access to essential services posed serious difficulties to the Government. The delegation informed the Commission that its country had embarked on a programme of consolidation of the population in larger centres in order to provide better protection to the population.

152. One delegation emphasized the concept of human security along with the notion of poverty reduction through economic growth and the importance of ownership and partnership.

153. In that regard, one delegation stated that there was as yet no internationally agreed definition of the concept of human security.

154. While sharing experiences on poverty reduction, one delegation noted the difficulties of reducing poverty in a situation of conflict. It observed that conflicts resulted in infrastructure losses, restricted expenditure on development by the Government, obstructed the work of international organizations and non-governmental organizations, and discouraged the private investments necessary for economic growth. Conflicts also weakened service delivery at the grass-roots level, which was essential for poverty reduction, and affected production, trade and transactions. The delegation requested that the secretariat explore and study the links between poverty reduction and tourism, and poverty reduction and conflict.

155. One delegation observed that poverty was not only a problem of low income, but also of high expenses. It informed the Commission about a good practice involving mutual learning by villagers to reduce unnecessary expenses and enabling household and community savings to be made. In that respect, the concept of the sufficiency economy proposed by His Majesty the King of Thailand was explained.

156. Several delegations noted the crucial role of infrastructure in enhancing economic growth, particularly that resulting from trade and development. Given the strong linkages between economic growth and poverty reduction, they recognized the importance of developing road, water supply and ICT infrastructure. With regard to the financing of infrastructure development, it was noted that the improvement in the investment climate played a critical role in facilitating public and private infrastructure projects. Such infrastructure facilitated economic growth and poverty reduction, enabling the region to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

157. The Commission agreed that decentralization was an important tool for poverty reduction, as Governments were unable to respond to all the needs of all the people. It noted that problems differed from one region to another within a country and that decentralization facilitated the development of different solutions to address the specific problems of the different regions within a country. It was acknowledged, however, that decentralization needed to be accompanied by development of the capacity of local officials.

158. Several delegations noted that community-based development was essential to reduce poverty. Through a community-based approach, people were enabled to take charge of their own lives, their communities and their future, and to monitor the impact of poverty reduction programmes. Through participatory planning of rural development, the rural population was able to identify its most urgent needs and problems, and to formulate appropriate plans to address them. It required government support, however, for the implementation of its plans in the form of financial assistance and capacity development. The delegations called on the secretariat to conduct more studies on community-based development, urban management and participatory development planning.

159. One delegation observed that community-based approaches to environmental protection increased the sense of ownership by communities of natural resources and ensured their cautious and sustainable use. Community-based development in rural areas also created economic and social opportunities for the rural poor and reduced their need to seek new opportunities in urban areas, thereby limiting the need for rural-urban migration.

160. One delegation noted the importance of the development of secondary crops for poverty reduction. It commended the ESCAP Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Secondary Crops Development in Asia and the Pacific (CAPSA) for its work, in particular the information on secondary crops which it generated. With the aim of enhancing the Centre's regional impact, one delegation invited ESCAP member States to start contributing, or to increase contributions, to the Centre and urged CAPSA to share success stories with member States.

161. The Commission acknowledged the importance of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and the extension of microfinance as instruments for poverty reduction. It also highlighted the importance of good governance, transparency and accountability in rural development. Financial management for development at the village level needed to be transparent, so that all could see how public and community funds were being used.

162. One delegation cited the conclusion of the Expert Group Meeting on Rural Development and Rural Poverty Reduction, which had been held in Bangkok in May 2005, that past rural development programmes had often been ineffective because the officials carrying out those programmes did not recognize sufficiently the importance of good governance and inclusiveness. It stressed that a rights-based approach to development was critical for poverty reduction.

163. One delegation stressed the positive impact of ICT on rural poverty reduction, as it empowered citizens by providing access to information and knowledge. It noted that ICT enabled the rural population to avoid middlemen, who often sought disproportionate profits by virtue of their access to

information on prevailing prices in various markets. ICT increased the bargaining power of farmers and could help tackle corruption at the grass-roots level. The Commission was informed of good practices in the use of ICT for rural poverty reduction, such as e-villages.

164. The Commission recognized that poverty was a multifaceted phenomenon and that a proper understanding and an effective reduction of poverty required data and information, in various formats, from a number of government agencies and other stakeholders. It recognized the importance of reliable and timely statistics for creating targeted, cost-effective and coherent poverty reduction policies.

165. Several delegations noted with appreciation the capacity-building support that the secretariat had provided for the development of official statistics in general and poverty measurement in particular. They requested the secretariat to continue facilitating the exchange of best practices in the collection, compilation, dissemination and analysis of poverty statistics and other statistics needed for monitoring the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

166. One delegation noted that it was not unusual for agencies of the same Government to provide contradictory data on the same phenomenon, and made the suggestion that the secretariat develop a project to study and make recommendations on an integrated data-collection model for national poverty statistics. Such a project could facilitate better cooperation among government agencies in collecting, sharing and using poverty-related data.

167. The Commission called on the secretariat to establish dialogue between member States in order for them to exchange experiences in poverty reduction, to continue to implement demonstration projects and to organize platforms for the sharing of knowledge, experiences and good practices in poverty reduction and public-private partnerships. The Commission noted the offer by several delegations to share their experiences on poverty reduction with other ESCAP members.

168. The Commission adopted resolution 62/10 on strengthening statistical capacity in Asia and the Pacific.

169. Given the impact of natural disasters on poverty reduction, one delegation requested the secretariat to pay further attention, and give priority, to regional measures on managing natural disasters. Another delegation urged the secretariat to study the opportunities for debt-for-equity swaps that helped countries to reduce poverty.

170. The Commission observed that the region had a substantial number of people living on less than $1 a day. As ESCAP was the only regional forum covering the entire region, it urged that the secretariat continue to tackle poverty reduction issues in cooperation with member countries and other international organizations. In that respect, it called on the secretariat to formulate a road map to achieve the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific. The Commission reiterated that the Millennium Development Goals were a compact and integrated set of intrinsically related and linked goals, with targets within each goal; if the region was to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, no goals could be excluded.

Managing globalization

171. The Commission had before it documents E/ESCAP/1366, E/ESCAP/1367 and Corr.1 and E/ESCAP/1368-1371, covering the work of four subprogrammes in the area of managing globalization, namely, International trade and investment, Transport infrastructure and facilitation and tourism, Environment and sustainable development and Information, communication and space technology. It commended the secretariat on the quality of the documents.

172. The Commission generally supported the report of the Committee on Managing Globalization on its second session (E/ESCAP/1366), including strategies for the two parts of that Committee, namely, Part I: International trade and investment, and transport infrastructure and facilitation and tourism, and Part II: Information, communications and space technology, and environment and sustainable development. However, in view of the convening of the Ministerial Conference on Transport in November 2006 and the Third Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific in February 2007, one delegation suggested that Part I of the Committee on Managing Globalization should focus more on trade and investment, while Part II should focus more on environment and sustainable development.

Trade and investment

173. The Commission noted that trade and investment were important sources of financing for development. It also noted that, for trade to be an effective engine of growth and development, an open, non-discriminatory, rules-based, universal and equitable multilateral trading system had a crucial role to play.

174. The Commission drew attention to the progress achieved in the Doha-mandated negotiations as embodied in the Ministerial Declaration adopted at the Sixth WTO Ministerial Conference, held in Hong Kong, China, from 13 to 18 December 2005, while also noting that numerous challenges lay ahead and intensive efforts would be needed to meet the deadlines contained in the Ministerial Declaration.

175. A number of delegations observed that a development outcome of the negotiations was linked largely to improved market access for export products of interest to developing countries, through the reduction or elimination of trade protectionism, particularly with regard to trade-distorting subsidies, high tariffs, tariff escalation, tariff peaks and non-tariff barriers, and to providing enhanced opportunities for the

temporary movement of natural persons. It was also observed that, because a large proportion of the population in the region depended on subsistence agriculture, addressing food and livelihood security concerns was an important aspect of the development dimension of the Doha negotiations.

176. The Commission commended the secretariat on the usefulness of the WTO/ESCAP technical assistance programme. It requested the secretariat to continue to accord high priority to the implementation of that programme.

177. The Commission noted that many ESCAP members and associate members were not yet members of WTO and requested the secretariat to continue to assist those countries seeking accession to WTO for equally applicable accession.

178. The Commission noted that a balanced outcome of the trade facilitation negotiations could lead to a substantial reduction in trade transaction costs and improve overall trade competitiveness, thus leading to "win-win" results for development and the global trading system as a whole. Several delegations raised the issue of supply-side constraints and requested that the secretariat continue its regional technical cooperation programmes for improving the implementation of trade facilitation measures and strengthening of SMEs and e-commerce to enhance trade efficiency and competitiveness.

179. The Commission took note of the intention of Mongolia to host a conference of trade ministers of WTO members and landlocked developing countries in Ulaanbaatar in 2007 and its request for support in preparation for the conference.

180. The Commission underscored the importance of strengthening capacity in trade policy analysis and research. It also expressed appreciation of the ongoing work of the Asia-Pacific Research and Training Network on Trade (ARTNeT), noting its contribution to policy-related decision-making and promoting regional cooperation in trade research analysis and information sharing. In that regard, the complementarities between ARTNeT and the WTO/ESCAP technical assistance programme were underlined and the secretariat was requested to continue to strengthen those mutually beneficial linkages.

181. The Commission noted that regional and bilateral trade agreements could be an effective means of promoting trade and investment flows, both regionally and globally. In that context, it supported the secretariat's analytical work, including the regional trade agreement/bilateral trade agreement database it had set up, and its efforts to build on common principles, so that such agreements could become building blocks of the multilateral trading system.

182. The Commission observed that ministers of participating States of the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA) had signed the amended text and expressed appreciation to the secretariat for providing secretariat services for the Agreement. One delegation noted that the Agreement had the potential to evolve into a mechanism for promoting greater regional cooperation and solidarity. In that context, timely implementation of the commitments, and assessment of the benefits emanating therefrom, were necessary.

183. A number of delegations also observed that, in order to fulfil the potential of APTA, it was necessary to deepen liberalization and widen coverage in accordance with the relevant provisions contained in the Agreement. The secretariat was requested, upon entry into force of the Agreement, to promote awareness of the Agreement, undertake an analysis and promote the exchange of information on the exports and imports being traded under APTA and engage the private sector to a greater degree. The expansion of membership in APTA was supported in conformity with the principles of transparency, national treatment and most-favoured-nation status enshrined in the Agreement.

184. Several delegations noted that, in order to utilize enhanced market access opportunities, developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, landlocked and transit developing countries and small island developing countries, needed to build up production capacity in order to supply markets. The Commission welcomed and emphasized the outcomes achieved in cooperation on trade and investment facilitation in the Greater Mekong Subregion. One delegation expressed appreciation of the secretariat's efforts to establish supply chains in the Subregion. A number of delegations suggested that the secretariat continue to implement that work, including trade and investment facilitation, entrepreneurship development, promotion and facilitation of FDI, improvement of the investment climate and brand diversification.

185. The Commission adopted resolution 62/6 on managing globalization through strengthened regional cooperation in trade and investment.

186. One delegation recognized the important role of science and technology in enterprise development and requested that the secretariat implement programmes aimed at promoting innovation in SMEs. It also requested the secretariat to undertake, in collaboration with the World Intellectual Property Organization and other international organizations, studies on trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights and the benefits and costs to SMEs participating in global supply chains.

Transport infrastructure and facilitation and tourism

187. The Commission recognized that, in order to accelerate economic growth, trade and FDI, the development of good quality infrastructure was a necessity.

188. The Commission noted the progress in infrastructure development reported by a number of countries, including Cambodia, India, Indonesia, the

Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation.

189. The Commission expressed its support for the development of the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway networks, as well as Euro-Asian transport corridors. It noted that both networks would become the basic building blocks for the development of an international integrated intermodal transport network for the region.

190. The Commission urged that the secretariat continue its work to promote the development of intermodal transport infrastructure, particularly to meet the special needs of subregions and of landlocked and transit developing countries. A number of delegations requested that the special needs of archipelagic and island countries be included in those activities. The Commission requested that the secretariat continue providing assistance to member countries, with regard to financing the Asian Highway infrastructure, and extend its work to other infrastructure sectors.

191. The Commission noted with satisfaction the entry into force of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network in July 2005, which clearly demonstrated a high level of regional cooperation. It also noted the recent ratification of the Agreement by India and Thailand. The Commission expressed appreciation of the support provided by the Government of Japan for the secretariat's work in relation to the Asian Highway network.

192. The Commission noted with satisfaction that the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network had been finalized at an intergovernmental meeting held in Bangkok in November 2005. It also noted that some countries had requested minor corrections with respect to the names of stations on existing routes listed in annex 1 to the Agreement.

193. The Commission adopted resolution 62/4 on the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network.

194. The Commission welcomed the offer of the Government of the Republic of Korea to host the Ministerial Conference on Transport in Busan from 6 to 11 November 2006. The Conference would include a signing ceremony for the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network. The Commission also supported the draft agenda for the Ministerial Conference.

195. The Commission expressed its full support for the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network and the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network and emphasized their role in facilitating cooperation between countries and promoting the coordinated development of infrastructure across the region as a tool to enhance economic integration through trade and tourism. It also recognized their role in assisting member countries in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

196. Some delegations drew attention to the successful implementation of demonstration runs of container block-trains along the northern corridor of the Trans-Asian Railway network. They welcomed the announcement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that it would participate in future demonstration runs after the line between its north-eastern town of Rajin and Tumangang had been upgraded in accordance with the cooperation agreement between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation concluded in Vladivostok, Russian Federation, in March 2006.

197. The Commission noted with satisfaction the secretariat's study on an integrated international transport and logistics system for North-East Asia and requested that the secretariat expand its work in that area.

198. The Commission also noted with satisfaction the progress made in promoting transport facilitation. It requested that the secretariat continue to cooperate with the Economic Commission for Europe, ADB and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in that area and provide assistance in acceding to international conventions on transport facilitation.

199. In view of the shortfall in the financing available for infrastructure, the Commission recognized that innovative ways of mobilizing finance for infrastructure investment needed to be identified. Furthermore, it noted the initiatives of India in establishing the Infrastructure Development Finance Corporation Limited and of Indonesia in setting up the Pro-Poor Public-Private Partnership Resource and Training Centre. In that respect, several delegations requested that the secretariat initiate capacity-building and technical cooperation activities for its members in the implementation of infrastructure projects.

200. The Commission welcomed the outcome of the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on Sustainable Tourism Development, held in Bali, Indonesia, from 7 to 9 December 2005, and Phase II (2006-2012) of the Plan of Action for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Asian and Pacific Region, annexed to document E/ESCAP/1369.

201. The Commission also endorsed the proposal for a regional study on the role of tourism in socio-economic development to be prepared by the secretariat for submission to the Commission at its sixty-third session, in 2007. One delegation requested that the role of rural tourism be included in the study.

202. The Commission reiterated the importance of capacity-building, in both the public and private sectors, as contained in Phase II of the Plan of Action. One delegation proposed that cultural tourism be promoted as a means of fostering multicultural learning.

203. The Commission adopted resolution 62/3 on the implementation of the Plan of Action for Sustainable

Tourism Development in Asia and the Pacific, Phase II (2006-2012) and the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Tourism Development.

Environment and sustainable development

204. The Commission noted with appreciation the activities carried out by the secretariat relating to environment and sustainable development, especially their importance for the implementation of the recommendations of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and for achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

205. Some delegations observed that the rapid economic growth in the region was increasing the pressure on the carrying capacity of the environment in Asia and the Pacific. Harnessing the positive dynamics of economic growth while ensuring improvement of environmental sustainability required close collaboration among government, private sector and civil society actors.

206. The Commission commended the activities undertaken to promote "green growth" and recommended the continuation of such activities, especially technical assistance for capacity-building, and enhanced regional and subregional cooperation.

207. The Commission underscored the need for sustainable and eco-efficient natural resources management, which required a fundamental review of lifestyles, and recommended the promotion of initiatives such as the "3 Rs", Reduce, Reuse and Recycle.

208. One delegation drew the attention of the Commission to the suggestion that a mechanism be established to assist micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in promoting the principles of efficient use of raw materials and energy efficiency, which could also be followed in agricultural practices and household activities.

209. Another delegation supported the establishment of a regional "help desk" on sustainable consumption and production.

210. The Commission noted the activities that had been undertaken in the framework of the International Decade for Action, "Water for Life", 2005-2015, and in preparation for the Fourth World Water Forum, held in Mexico City in March 2006. It acknowledged the need for promoting sustainable water resources management and "Local actions for a global challenge", the theme of the Forum, for sustainable development, particularly related to water and health issues.

211. The Commission pointed to the important role that the secretariat could play in promoting environmentally sustainable management of natural resources, especially for the rehabilitation of coastal, mangrove and coral ecosystems and through the promotion of eco-tourism to enhance the livelihood of the people living in Pacific and other island developing countries.

212. Noting the challenges to economic development that stemmed from rising oil prices, the Commission emphasized the importance of the work of the secretariat in promoting regional and subregional cooperation for the diversification of energy resources, the development of environmentally sound energy technologies and alternative and renewable energy sources (such as microhydro, biogas, biofuel and geothermal), including small-scale projects aimed at poverty reduction. The Commission recommended that the secretariat further promote the replication of successfully implemented projects in the area of sustainable energy development, such as the initiatives under the ESCAP project on pro-poor public-private partnerships.

213. The Commission expressed appreciation to the secretariat for its efforts to promote energy cooperation in North-East Asia, including the establishment of the Intergovernmental Collaborative Mechanism for Energy Cooperation in North-East Asia and the Working Group on Energy Planning and Policy, to develop the potential for transboundary energy trade and to work towards the vision adopted under the Ulaanbaatar Statement of Senior Officials on Energy Cooperation in North-East Asia, to have "by 2020, improved energy security in North-East Asia through energy cooperation in a sustainable manner".[1]

214. The Commission highlighted the importance of energy security in achieving sustainable economic growth in the region. The region had considerable potential for improving energy cooperation and creating region-wide energy infrastructure; the Commission noted the interest in an integrated trans-Asian energy system aimed at safeguarding the supply of energy resources to final consumption destinations within the region and requested that the secretariat take the necessary measures, including preliminary studies, with a view to facilitating the formulation and implementation of such a system.

215. The Commission commended the efforts of the secretariat towards the implementation of the nature conservation programme under the framework of the North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation. The importance of continuing to support the activities in the areas of abatement of air pollution from coal-fired power plants and the mitigation of the effects of dust and sandstorms in the subregion was underlined. The decision on the establishment of an institutional support mechanism for that Programme needed to be based on a consensus of all the member countries of the Programme, taking into consideration the existing financial resources and ongoing projects.

216. The Commission noted that air pollution in mega-cities was a serious problem, which caused

[1] See the report of the Senior Officials Committee on Energy Cooperation in North-East Asia on its first session, held in Ulaanbaatar on 16 and 17 November 2005 (ESD/CECNEA/Rep.).

people's health to deteriorate and had adverse effects on economic growth. It requested that the secretariat undertake a study to identify the primary sources of air pollution in mega-cities in order to enable the formulation of effective prevention and mitigation strategies. It also underlined the importance of continuing support for the implementation of the Kitakyushu Initiative for a Clean Environment, which successfully addressed major issues of urban development, including air pollution.

217. The Commission underlined the importance of maintaining the sustainable development of biological resources for the further economic development of the countries in the region. In that regard, it requested that the secretariat assist member countries in the establishment of a national biological resource centre. Furthermore, it expressed support for the secretariat to act as the focal point for a regional biological resource network to facilitate the transfer of biological resource management technologies.

218. The Commission underscored the adverse impact of natural disasters on the economic development and growth of countries in the region. It expressed appreciation for the work that had been undertaken thus far by the secretariat in enhancing the capacity of member States in disaster management, and noted the need to continue activities in disaster management and preparedness. It noted with appreciation that the Multi-Donor Voluntary Trust Fund on Tsunami Early Warning Arrangements in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia had already been established with contributions from the Governments of Thailand and Sweden, and the member States were invited to make use of the Fund for capacity-building in the development of tsunami early warning systems, as well as to consider contributing to the Fund.

219. The Commission adopted resolution 62/7 on strengthening regional cooperation and coordination of early warning system arrangements for tsunamis through the Multi-Donor Voluntary Trust Fund on Tsunami Early Warning Arrangements in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia.

Information, communication and space technology

220. The Commission emphasized the importance of ICST for sustainable economic and social development, and expressed full support of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society. In that regard, one delegation requested that the secretariat set up a forum on Internet governance to facilitate multi-stakeholder policy dialogue.

221. The Commission supported the priority activities of the secretariat in the field of ICST identified by the Committee on Managing Globalization. In particular, it stressed the importance of strengthening national capacity for building an enabling environment, including promotion of ICST applications and strengthening human resources development in such technology. In that regard, the secretariat was also requested to pay special attention to the needs of least developed countries.

222. In order to build an information society and to ensure secure and affordable access to information, one delegation suggested that member Governments take the following measures: invest in the production and supply of information in local languages, promote private-sector participation, develop national information infrastructure and seek international cooperation.

223. The Commission emphasized the importance of ICST in support of effective disaster reduction in the region. It noted regional initiatives, including the Sentinel-Asia project, which were aimed at providing information on disaster reduction. The Commission noted with appreciation a proposal of the Islamic Republic of Iran to host an information and communication and space technology-enabled disaster management centre under the ESCAP umbrella. In that regard, the secretariat was requested to conduct the required study and assist the Islamic Republic of Iran in enhancing capacity-building for the establishment and operation of the proposed centre.

224. The Commission welcomed with appreciation the offer made by the Government of Malaysia to host the Third Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific in February 2007. It recommended the continuation of the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development. The Commission noted with appreciation the continued support of member States, including India and Japan, in the implementation of the Programme and the preparations for the Conference. It encouraged all members and associate members of ESCAP to participate in the Conference. Several delegations requested the secretariat, in preparing for the Conference, to harmonize the efforts under the Programme with the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the World Conference on Disaster Reduction.

225. The Commission adopted resolution 62/5 on building the information society in Asia and the Pacific.

Emerging social issues

226. The Commission had before it a note by the secretariat on progress in addressing persistent and emerging social issues (E/ESCAP/1372), containing the report of the Committee on Emerging Social Issues on its second session, held in Bangkok from 1 to 3 November 2005, and information on progress attained in implementation of the resolutions of the Commission relating to persistent and emerging social issues and other related issues over the past year.

227. The Commission expressed appreciation of the comprehensive, informative and focused documentation on emerging social issues and commended the secretariat on its efforts in addressing them.

228. The Commission noted the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee on Emerging Social Issues, as contained in the report on its second session.

229. The importance of the goals of poverty eradication, employment expansion and social integration that had been adopted by the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen in March 1995, was reaffirmed. Some delegations called for continuous efforts to meet those goals and expand access for all, especially the poor, to basic social services. One delegation emphasized the need to strengthen national capacity and exchange good practices in order to better address the challenges to social development. Another delegation requested that the secretariat continue to provide technical assistance to members and associate members, and organize policy dialogues and technical training aimed at promoting social development and enhancing social integration, gender equality, equality between ethnic groups, and health and development, paying particular attention to the mainstreaming of the concerns of disadvantaged groups.

230. Some delegations recognized the social dimensions of the development process and the continuing importance of providing support for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups such as youth, older persons and persons with disabilities.

231. A number of delegations exchanged views on national experiences in addressing youth-related issues. The challenges that young people in the region faced were recognized, and ranged from poverty, lack of skills and unemployment to inadequate access to social services. The importance of meeting the development needs of young people, especially disadvantaged young people from rural areas and poor households, and unemployed youth, was recognized by one delegation, as was the need for strengthening national policies and programmes on youth. The Commission emphasized the importance of addressing the issue of youth unemployment, including unemployment among rural youth, young people with disabilities and those from minorities. It recognized the critical role of training and upgrading of skills in providing a desirable solution to the unemployment of youth.

232. The Commission requested that the secretariat continue to provide technical support and assistance to members and associate members in their efforts to promote the development of youth and enhance their employability through better investment in education, skill training, social protection and improved access to social services. The Commission also requested that the secretariat assist members and associate members in the development and strengthening of national laws and policies on youth.

233. The Commission adopted resolution 62/8 on the implementation of the International Plan of Action for the United Nations Literacy Decade.

234. One delegation emphasized the importance of ensuring child protection through legal measures, policy advocacy and social campaigns to raise awareness. It called for assistance by the secretariat in enhancing regional cooperation in promoting child protection and combating the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

235. Some delegations shared national experiences in promoting the well-being and economic empowerment of persons with disabilities and noted the progress made in implementing the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific. Members of the Commission exchanged views on efforts to remove barriers to the development of persons with disabilities, including stigmatization, discrimination and lack of access to resources and protection. The Commission expressed support for holding a high-level intergovernmental meeting on the midpoint review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012, in 2007.

236. One delegation commended the secretariat for its role in coordinating regional support for elaborating the draft international convention on the protection of the rights and dignity of people with disabilities and another pointed out the need for including in the text of that convention a section on women with disabilities.

237. A number of delegations shared national experiences in addressing issues relating to population ageing and meeting the needs of older persons for health and income security. The Commission expressed support for convening a high-level meeting to review the progress achieved in carrying out the Shanghai Implementation Strategy for the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and the Macao Plan of Action on Ageing for Asia and the Pacific, to be held in Macao, China, in 2007.

238. Recognizing that the family remained a fundamental social institution instrumental in enhancing social integration and cohesion, and serving as a coping mechanism for individuals and communities, one delegation emphasized the need for policies to support the institution of the family. The secretariat was requested to give greater focus to analysing the family as a changing institution and family well-being, and to examining the linkages between family well-being, effective public policies, the provision of social services and intergenerational relationships.

239. The Commission acknowledged the linkage between migration and economic and social development. While emphasizing the need to combat illegal migration and strengthen laws to prevent the victimization of migrant workers, it called for strengthened regional cooperation on migration and on the protection of the rights of migrant workers. A number of delegations welcomed the convening of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development to be held in New York in September 2006.

240. Some delegations exchanged national experiences in dealing with human trafficking. Noting that human trafficking was a transnational organized crime, the combating of which required close

international cooperation, one delegation called on members and associate members to enhance cooperation and strengthen their laws to prevent human trafficking and protect its victims.

241. Delegations exchanged experiences on programmes and measures taken by them to implement the Beijing Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in September 1995, and the outcomes of the global and regional reviews, including measures to increase the participation of women in the political process, government and the private sector. The Commission noted with satisfaction the high level of commitment shown by many countries towards ensuring gender equality and recognizing the role of women in development and poverty reduction.

242. One delegation took note of the regional workshop on enhancing gender mainstreaming within the development programmes of member countries, organized by Indonesia in December 2005. ESCAP was requested to follow up on the recommendations adopted at that workshop. It was also requested to review and analyse the opportunities associated with globalization and its impact on women, to give priority to women's access to productive resources and to migrant and trafficked women, and to assist in strengthening national machinery for the advancement of women and in incorporating a gender dimension into each Millennium Development Goal.

243. Some delegations drew attention to the need to conduct research on areas such as women's participation in public life and gender aspects of ageing and to promote regional cooperation for entrepreneurial capacity-building for the economic empowerment of women. One delegation requested that the secretariat organize a forum on increasing women's participation in public life. Another delegation requested that the secretariat study the financial and psychosocial status of single parents, 70 per cent of whom were women.

244. The Commission commended the secretariat on its work in promoting health and development and expressed its support for the secretariat to continue work in that area in the future.

245. The Commission expressed concern about the spread of avian influenza across the region. A number of delegations outlined the contingency plans that their Governments were implementing to contain outbreaks in poultry and to prevent the disease from evolving into a pandemic. The Commission agreed on the importance of transparency and the exchange of information and technical cooperation at the bilateral, regional and global levels in order to tackle the problem effectively. It requested that the secretariat continue its collaboration with other United Nations agencies in order to assist member countries in, inter alia, creating multisectoral capacity for surveillance and a global early warning system against communicable diseases and in building stockpiles of vaccines and pharmaceuticals.

246. The secretariat was requested to work closely with agencies such as WHO in order to create capacity in areas related to the strengthening of primary health care and health systems as a means of achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The Commission emphasized the need to tackle communicable diseases, such as HIV, and non-communicable diseases in an effective manner, while avoiding duplication of work.

247. One delegation recognized the importance of health protection schemes for rural populations as an important means for reducing their poverty and improving their health.

Least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States

248. The Commission had before it the report of the Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries on its ninth session (E/ESCAP/1373). It expressed appreciation to the secretariat for the comprehensive report and endorsed the recommendations contained therein, specifically those on (a) creation of employment and income-earning opportunities for vulnerable groups in Pacific island developing countries, (b) follow-up to the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and (c) the Commission's activities in the Pacific.

249. In connection with the creation of employment and income-earning opportunities for vulnerable groups in the Pacific, some delegations recommended that the experiences relevant to Pacific island developing countries be documented and shared through policy advice and workshops. It was requested that the secretariat investigate the potential for technical cooperation and capacity development partnerships between countries in Asia and the Pacific.

250. One delegation noted the potential of the informal sector in creating employment for vulnerable groups and requested that the secretariat consider developing a comprehensive short-term labour programme to address the high rate of unemployment in Pacific island countries.

251. On the follow-up to the Mauritius Strategy, the Commission recommended that (a) the programme of work of the secretariat mainstream the priorities and commitments of the Mauritius Strategy; (b) the possible establishment of dedicated satellite communication infrastructure be considered in the light of the specific difficulties of Pacific small island developing States in responding to the outcome of the World Summit on the Information Society; (c) the collection and dissemination of data on economic and social matters be further improved; and (d) a regional review of the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy be conducted in collaboration with relevant subregional organizations in 2008.

252. With regard to the activities in the Pacific, it was proposed that a working group be set up comprising representatives of embassies and high commissions of Pacific island economies based in Fiji. The working group would meet twice a year in Suva in order to enhance the interaction between ESCAP and its Pacific island member States. The terms of reference of the working group in Suva should be formulated. To ensure broader participation of Pacific island countries which were without Suva-based missions, invitations should be sent to participants outside Fiji to attend the meeting, with no additional cost to the secretariat.

253. Several delegations noted that UN-EPOC was now strategically placed to be well integrated with the community of regional and international organizations since it had relocated to Suva. The Commission urged that the secretariat strengthen UN-EPOC so that it would be able to foster closer links between Asian and Pacific economies and make use of the South-South cooperation modality.

254. One delegation requested that the Executive Secretary consider the appointment of a suitably qualified Pacific islander to the vacant post of Head of UN-EPOC in order to build and enhance the sense of ownership among Pacific island developing countries.

255. The Commission welcomed the convening of the Pacific Leaders' United Nations ESCAP Special Session (PLUS) for the first time and expressed confidence that it would draw considerable attention to the development needs of those countries and would be to their mutual benefit.

256. The Commission noted the triennial Japan-Pacific Islands Forum Summit Meetings (PALM) hosted by Japan, as well as the Okinawa Initiative: Regional Development Strategy for a More Prosperous and Safer Pacific. Based on that Initiative, adopted at the Third Meeting held in 2003, Japan had supported the efforts of Pacific island countries in the areas of economic infrastructure, regional cooperation for preventive measures against epidemics, environmental management, distance learning and human resources development. It also noted that the Fourth Meeting would be held in May 2006.

257. Several delegations called for strengthened collaboration between UN-EPOC and other bodies, including development agencies, financial institutions, private sector organizations, non-governmental organizations and donors. The Commission urged that the secretariat design and facilitate tripartite cooperation mechanisms to support Pacific-Asia partnerships.

258. In order to ensure that the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States were able to attain their internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, the Commission noted the need for (a) a regional road map to ensure the implementation of the Jakarta Declaration on Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific: the Way Forward 2015; (b) the commitment of adequate resources; and (c) the participation of all stakeholders. In the case of the least developed countries, the financial resources available for their development needed to be increased, their supply-side constraints addressed and market access improved; the severely indebted least developed countries in Asia and the Pacific needed to be included in recently launched debt relief initiatives.

259. The Commission took note of the recommendations contained in the report of the Regional Review of the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010, held in Bangkok on 14 and 15 March 2006, as the regional input into the global comprehensive review to be conducted during the sixty-first session of the General Assembly.

260. One delegation requested the Commission to support the draft resolution on the least developed countries, which had been submitted to the Commission at its current session on behalf of the 14 least developed countries in Asia and the Pacific. The Commission adopted resolution 62/11 on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the least developed countries for the Decade 2001-2010.

261. The Commission noted that, in addition to the evaluation of transit trade and transport, the establishment of economic infrastructure, trade facilitation measures and enhanced regional cooperation between landlocked and transit developing countries were essential for addressing the high transport and logistic costs in landlocked developing countries.

262. The Commission expressed appreciation to India, Indonesia, Japan and Thailand for their willingness to offer technical cooperation activities in several areas, including agriculture, disaster relief, education, energy, health, ICT, law, medicine, microfinance, poverty reduction, water resources development and environmentally sustainable development for the benefit of least developed, landlocked and island developing countries.

263. The Commission called upon all development partners to give larger focus to the least developed countries in Asia and the Pacific in their cooperation programmes and urged that greater use be made of South-South as well as trilateral modalities in the delivery of technical and economic cooperation among developing countries. It requested that the secretariat facilitate the whole process of dissemination of good practices in the diverse areas of development cooperation among the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.

264. The Commission expressed appreciation to donor countries and international organizations for their support of activities implemented by ESCAP for the benefit of least developed, landlocked and Pacific island developing countries and territories.

265. The Commission adopted resolutions 62/9, on regional follow-up to the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, and 62/12, on strengthening Pacific island developing countries and territories through regional cooperation.

Management issues

Programme performance report for 2004-2005

266. The Commission had before it a note by the secretariat containing the programme performance report for 2004-2005 (E/ESCAP/1374 and Corr.1).

267. The Executive Secretary pointed out that the programme performance report for 2004-2005 reflected a continuation of the focus on results-based reporting by the secretariat.

268. The Executive Secretary informed the Commission that the highlights of programme achievements by thematic area, overall challenges and obstacles, and results and lessons learned under each of the seven ESCAP subprogrammes during the biennium 2004-2005 were included in the report.

269. The report emphasized programme achievements in 2004-2005 by focusing on more meaningful qualitative reporting of key results achieved rather than on quantitative output delivery. It was based on evidence collected from end-users of the secretariat's products and services as well as from evaluation findings covering the period under review.

270. The Commission expressed appreciation to the secretariat and welcomed the programme performance report based upon a results-based perspective. The view was expressed that the lessons learned as contained in the report would be beneficial for future programme planning. One delegation encouraged ESCAP member States to accord adequate attention to addressing the challenges, obstacles and unmet goals of the biennium 2004-2005.

271. One delegation expressed the view that the progress achieved in the development of the Asian-European transport corridors and the implementation of the four demonstration runs of container block-trains along the northern corridor of the Trans-Asian Railway should be reflected in the report for subprogramme 4, Transport and tourism.

272. One delegation expressed appreciation to the Commission for the progress made in promoting the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway, finalizing the Trans-Asian Highway agreement, and establishing a collaborative mechanism on energy cooperation in North-East Asia.

273. Another delegation requested that the secretariat share the model for, and lessons learned from, the development of community-based social safety nets under subprogramme 7, Social development, including persistent and emerging issues. The delegation also requested that the secretariat give further attention to supporting regional measures on managing natural disasters.

Proposed programme changes for 2006-2007

274. The Commission had before it a note by the secretariat containing the proposed programme changes for the biennium 2006-2007, and endorsed those changes (E/ESCAP/1375).

275. The Executive Secretary said that the proposed programme changes for the biennium 2006-2007 reflected the new mandates which the Commission had adopted at its sixty-first session, as well as emerging global priorities identified by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. In the light of the shift from output-oriented reporting to results-based management, the secretariat had proposed only major programme changes at the output level.

276. The major changes resulted from Commission resolution 61/1 of 18 May 2005 on the mid-term review concerning the functioning of the conference structure of the Commission, whereby the work of the former subcommittees had been subsumed under the respective thematic committees.

277. The Commission endorsed the proposed programme changes for 2006-2007 and noted the secretariat's adjustment of the programme of work to cope with changing mandates and circumstances, while maintaining focus on the three thematic areas of managing globalization, poverty reduction and emerging social issues.

278. One delegation cautioned the secretariat that placing less importance on water resources and energy might bring about an imbalance and loss of focus in subprogramme 6, Environment and sustainable development, since water resources, energy and climate change were seen as essential elements of the regional follow-up to global conferences and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The delegation urged the secretariat to maintain a balanced approach on the basis of mandates contained in several resolutions adopted by the Commission, including the Shanghai Declaration.

Draft strategic framework for the biennium 2008-2009

279. The Commission had before it the note by the secretariat containing the programme overview of the draft strategic framework for the biennium 2008-2009 (E/ESCAP/1376 and Corr.1). The Executive Secretary pointed out that the initial drafts of the document had been reviewed by all three thematic committees, which had met late in 2005. The document in its current form had been reviewed by ACPR in February 2006.

280. The Executive Secretary informed the Commission that the process of further developing the

programme plan of the strategic framework for the biennium 2008-2009 had been delayed pending the outcome of a review of mandates by the General Assembly.

281. The Commission endorsed the programme overview for the draft strategic framework, for eventual incorporation into the proposed biennial programme plan for 2008-2009. It also provided comments with a view to focusing ESCAP efforts on regional and subregional partnerships to expedite the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in the ESCAP region.

282. One delegation suggested that more attention be placed on enhancing regional cooperation for the protection of children's welfare, improving the quality of education and controlling communicable diseases, especially avian influenza, HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, during the further development of the strategic framework.

283. One delegation stressed the need to maintain poverty reduction as the overarching objective of the region for the strategic framework for 2008-2009 and requested the secretariat to note the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions that resources for travel and the engagement of consultants be limited.

284. The delegation also suggested that it might be premature to accept a rights-based approach as a principle in the strategic framework for 2008-2009.

ESCAP guidelines for programme monitoring, review and evaluation

285. The Commission had before it a document containing an overview of the guidelines for programme monitoring, review and evaluation used by the secretariat (E/ESCAP/1377).

286. The Executive Secretary informed the Commission that the secretariat was fully committed to implementing reform measures in support of results-based management, including those related to monitoring and evaluation. The integrated programme and project monitoring and evaluation framework developed by ESCAP would enable members and associate members to assess the secretariat's performance in implementing the strategic framework and to provide feedback to the secretariat.

287. The Commission stressed the importance of results-based management and expressed its strong support for initiatives taken by the secretariat in that regard, including those relating to monitoring and evaluation. Such initiatives could help the secretariat focus on organizational learning and the incorporation of lessons learned into future programme and project planning. They could help members and associate members to provide more informed advice regarding the ESCAP programme of work. They could also help in the identification of areas of high importance as well as areas that were obsolete, thereby ensuring that resources were used efficiently to achieve the intended results.

288. Several delegations expressed the view that the secretariat should further disseminate information on its results-based management initiatives, including its monitoring and evaluation framework, at the national and regional levels.

289. Moreover, some delegations expressed the view that that information should be complemented by training and advisory missions to specific countries to enable them to learn about and share experiences in project implementation, as well as issues relating to the financial and administrative management of projects.

290. One delegation expressed the view that adequate planning was an essential element of the successful implementation of projects and related its Government's experience with project monitoring and evaluation, including quarterly review meetings to resolve obstacles in implementation, the release of funds in accordance with workplans and actual needs, training, and the establishment of planning and monitoring cells in line ministries.

291. The Executive Secretary thanked the Commission for the constructive guidance and suggestions provided on the secretariat's programme reporting, planning, monitoring and evaluation work, and noted the Commission's general support of the programme performance report for 2004-2005, the proposed programme changes for 2006-2007 and the programme overview of the draft strategic framework for 2008-2009, as well as its support for the ESCAP guidelines for programme monitoring, review and evaluation.

Work of the regional institutions

292. The Commission had before it the reports of the regional institutions, namely, the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (APCTT), the United Nations Asian and Pacific Centre for Agricultural Engineering and Machinery (UNAPCAEM), the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Secondary Crops Development in Asia and the Pacific (CAPSA) and the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP) (E/ESCAP/1378 and Corr.1 and E/ESCAP/1379-1381).

293. The Executive Secretary, in his introduction, emphasized his commitment to the revitalization of the regional institutions. The work of the institutions was now fully aligned with the thematic priorities of ESCAP, as reflected in the strategic framework and programme of work of ESCAP for 2006-2007. In addition, three regular budget posts at the P-5 level, one each for APCTT, UNAPCAEM and CAPSA, had been approved by the General Assembly. However, despite progress in a number of areas, the Executive Secretary noted with concern that some of the regional institutions had difficulty securing adequate funding for their activities, and urged members and associate members to provide or

increase their annual contribution to those institutions. The new Governing Councils of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (APCICT), UNAPCAEM and CAPSA would be constituted during the current session of the Commission.

294. The Executive Secretary also reported on the progress made in the implementation of Commission resolution 61/6 of 18 May 2005 on the establishment of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development in the Republic of Korea. A host country agreement had been signed on 31 January 2006, and had entered into force on 16 March 2006 after its approval by the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea. The Centre would be officially opened, and the inaugural session of the Governing Council convened, in June 2006.

295. The Commission noted with appreciation the achievements of the four existing regional institutions over the course of the preceding year.

296. The Commission requested that the secretariat help the regional institutions to obtain greater financial sustainability, and urged that member and associate member countries increase their annual contributions to the institutions.

297. One delegation proposed that UNAPCAEM undertake technical cooperation activities in the area of post-harvest technology and management applied to tropical fruits as well as mechanization and automation of farm production.

298. The delegations of Malaysia and Indonesia expressed the desire of their Governments to continue working with SIAP in conducting regional courses and seminars. Specifically, the Government of Malaysia proposed to hold with SIAP, in June 2006, the Second Regional Course on Statistical Quality Management and the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.

299. The representative of Japan informed the Commission that the Government of Japan, through the Japan International Cooperation Agency, would provide fellowships for 75 participants in SIAP courses. The representative also requested countries to reply to the needs survey that would be conducted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan from May to August 2006.

300. One delegation requested SIAP to increase its emphasis on e-learning and to consider involving subregional organizations, such as the Economic Cooperation Organization, in its technical cooperation programmes.

301. One delegation asked CAPSA to disseminate, through its website, examples of cases in which the production of secondary crops had alleviated poverty and improved employment.

302. Some delegations mentioned the importance of national ownership of workshops and training programmes, and requested the regional institutions to conduct more national-level workshops and courses.

303. The importance of training official statisticians in countries of the region to prepare relevant data in compiling Millennium Development Goal indicators was stressed. The delegation of Mongolia informed the Commission that it had submitted a draft resolution on strengthening statistical capacity in the region, and requested countries to support it.

304. In accordance with paragraph 9 of the statute of the UNAPCAEM, along with the host country, China, the Commission elected the following countries to the Governing Council of the Centre for the period 2006-2009: Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Republic of Korea, Thailand and Viet Nam.

305. In accordance with paragraph 9 of the statute of CAPSA, along with the host country, Indonesia, the Commission elected the following countries to the Governing Council of the Centre for the period 2006-2009: Bangladesh, France, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Pakistan, Republic of Korea and Thailand.

306. In accordance with paragraph 8 of the statute of APCICT, along with the host country, the Republic of Korea, the Commission elected the following countries to the Governing Council of the Centre for the period 2006-2009: Bangladesh, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Mongolia and Thailand.

307. In his concluding remarks, the Executive Secretary welcomed the support of members of the Commission for the five regional institutions, and placed on record his gratitude to the host Governments of the institutions, namely China, India, Indonesia, Japan and the Republic of Korea, for their support, both financial and technical. The secretariat would continue to strengthen the work of the regional institutions to ensure that they delivered effective services to the ESCAP membership.

2005 World Summit Outcome: implications for the work of ESCAP

308. The Commission had before it a note by the secretariat presenting recommendations contained in the 2005 World Summit Outcome[2] and their implications for the work of the ESCAP secretariat (E/ESCAP/1382).

309. The Executive Secretary informed the Commission that ESCAP had been closely involved in a number of United Nations-wide initiatives in response to the 2005 World Summit Outcome, including preparations for a review of mandates, strengthened coordination of the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs and mainstreaming gender concerns in programmes and projects. The Executive Secretary highlighted the increasing global attention being given to the development of "tightly managed entities",[3] and the development of a more integrated and cohesive

[2] General Assembly resolution 60/1 of 16 September 2005.
[3] Ibid., para. 169.

United Nations system, which, under proposals put forward by some Member States, might include merging United Nations departments, funds and programmes with mandates relating to economic and social development into one comprehensive development organization.

310. The Executive Secretary also drew the attention of the Commission to an external evaluation of ESCAP which he had recently initiated and which the Government of Japan had agreed to finance. The evaluation would assess the strategic role of ESCAP in the Asian and Pacific region and would be conducted by external evaluators to enhance its independence and credibility. ESCAP would be pleased to share the findings and recommendations of the evaluation with members and associate members, and hoped that the recommendations would provide valuable inputs into deliberations on United Nations reform.

311. The Commission welcomed the efforts of ESCAP to identify and take follow-up action with regard to the 2005 World Summit Outcome, and its efforts to support follow-up of the outcomes of other major United Nations conferences and summits, with particular emphasis on the Millennium Development Goals and according priority to least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, economies in transition and Pacific island developing countries.

312. One delegation noted with satisfaction that gender mainstreaming was central to the efforts of ESCAP in following up the 2005 World Summit Outcome and, towards that end, urged that ESCAP develop initiatives based on the recommendations of the Regional Workshop on Enhancing Gender Mainstreaming within the Development Programmes of ESCAP Members, held in Jakarta in December 2005 in partnership between ESCAP and the Government of Indonesia.

313. Some delegations welcomed the forthcoming review of the ESCAP conference structure mandated by Commission resolution 58/1 of 22 May 2002, which was to be carried out during the sixty-third session of the Commission in 2007. That effort would be important not only for effective follow-up to the 2005 World Summit Outcome, but also for ensuring that the work of ESCAP was well targeted and implemented effectively, and at the same time avoided the possibility of "forum fatigue".

314. One delegation noted with satisfaction that the revitalization of the ESCAP programme on South-South cooperation and the integration of that modality more explicitly into the ESCAP programme of work had been identified as a major issue in incorporating recommendations of the 2005 World Summit Outcome into the work of ESCAP. The delegation recommended that ESCAP develop a role as facilitator of tripartite arrangements and forge closer collaboration with existing South-South cooperation modalities, including the Non-Aligned Movement Centre for South-South Technical Cooperation, based in Jakarta.

315. Some delegations noted that the review of mandates in response to the 2005 World Summit Outcome, which was being carried out by the United Nations Secretariat, might include discussions on programmes of the regional commissions in relation to those of other United Nations entities, such as the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

316. In that regard, one delegation expressed support for the initiative of the Executive Secretary to carry out an external evaluation of ESCAP, which would provide valuable input into that process.

317. One delegation expressed the view that areas identified by the secretariat for a review of global-regional linkages of mandates should be examined more closely. In particular, in the area of trade and investment, there was a need to clarify the relationship between the roles of the regional commissions and UNCTAD and, in the area of population, proposals on institutional reform for managing migration might be raised in General Assembly meetings.

318. One delegation noted that decisions relating to the United Nations review of mandates, the reform of the Economic and Social Council and the broader reform of United Nations entities addressing economic and social issues would be taken by appropriate forums at the global level.

319. The Executive Secretary concluded by noting that the ensuing year would be a critical one for United Nations reform in the context of the 2005 World Summit Outcome. The Executive Secretary expressed his commitment to the further reform of the ESCAP secretariat and his belief that the external evaluation to be undertaken in the coming months would serve as a good basis for that process.

Technical cooperation activities of ESCAP and announcement of intended contributions

320. The Commission had before it a note by the secretariat containing an overview of the secretariat's technical cooperation activities and extrabudgetary contributions in 2005 (E/ESCAP/1383 and Corr.1).

321. The Executive Secretary informed the Commission that, in pursuance of Commission resolution 60/3 of 28 April 2004 on the work of ESCAP in implementing its technical cooperation projects, ESCAP had continued its reform efforts in line with its technical cooperation strategy. The primary goals of the reform were to increase the impact of the secretariat's technical cooperation work and to add value to its analytical and normative work. In that regard, the Executive Secretary emphasized the secretariat's efforts to revitalize its South-South cooperation programme in order to enhance its relevance, and contribute and add value, to the ESCAP programme of work.

322. The Executive Secretary emphasized that the overarching aim of the ESCAP technical cooperation

programme was to assist member countries, through capacity-building, in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. ESCAP projects continued to focus mainly on five of the eight Goals, 1, 3, 6, 7 and 8, in which it had a strong comparative advantage. The Executive Secretary drew the attention of the Commission to one of the main technical cooperation achievements in 2005, the launch of the second regional report on the Millennium Development Goals,[4] prepared under a unique, tripartite partnership between ESCAP, UNDP and ADB. That first-ever partnership between a United Nations regional commission, a United Nations development agency and a regional development bank had been globally recognized as a "best practice" for advocating the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

323. The Executive Secretary informed the Commission that in 2005 natural disasters had come to the forefront of the region's challenges, and that was reflected in the key priority areas of the secretariat. Natural hazards impeded poverty alleviation and had an adverse impact on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Natural disaster preparedness and prevention, in particular in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami that had devastated many parts of the Asian and Pacific region, had become one of the key priorities of ESCAP in 2005. The Executive Secretary noted that, while the ESCAP mandate did not cover emergency relief, the role of ESCAP as a regional commission was to promote regional cooperation in the long-term recovery process and to enhance preparedness for future disasters.

324. The Executive Secretary highlighted the launch late in 2005 of the Multi-Donor Voluntary Trust Fund on Tsunami Early Warning Arrangements in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia, with a $10 million contribution by the Government of Thailand and a subsequent contribution of $2.5 million from the Government of Sweden. The Fund, which was being managed by the secretariat as a contribution to the broader United Nations response, would aim at strengthening capacity in early warning arrangements for the region. The Executive Secretary expressed the hope that other Governments would soon join those of Thailand and Sweden so that the Fund could be further capitalized.

325. The Executive Secretary reported to the Commission that the total contributions received by ESCAP in 2005 for technical cooperation, from sources within and outside the United Nations, amounted to $25,431,007, representing an increase of close to 300 per cent over amounts contributed in 2004. In terms of delivery, the value of ESCAP technical cooperation in 2005 totalled approximately $13 million.

326. The Commission commended the secretariat for its comprehensive report on technical cooperation activities in 2005. It noted with satisfaction that the secretariat had continued its reform efforts aimed at increasing the impact of its technical cooperation work and adding value to the normative and analytical work of the secretariat. It also noted the highlights of the accomplishments of ESCAP set out in the report, particularly with regard to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals in the region. In that connection, the Commission commended the secretariat for the first-ever tripartite partnership with UNDP and ADB.

327. One delegation requested that the secretariat undertake more technical assistance activities in order to develop national ICT policies and to promote the use of free and open-source software in bridging the digital divide between and within countries in the region. The same delegation made special mention of the progress made on the Asian Highway network and its role in promoting intercountry trade and tourism. It expressed the hope that the network would be complemented soon with corresponding shipping services that would link outlying islands with the Asian mainland.

328. The Commission also noted the importance that Governments attributed to the technical cooperation activities of ESCAP, including through South-South cooperation. Several delegations expressed strong commitment to the technical cooperation activities of ESCAP through their continued support for ESCAP projects and regional institutions.

329. The Commission noted the following contributions pledged by members and associate members for 2006.

330. *Brunei Darussalam.* The delegation of Brunei Darussalam announced the following contributions:

	$
Pacific Trust Fund	1 000
SIAP	15 000

331. *Cambodia.* The secretariat had received written notification that the Government of Cambodia would make the following contributions:

	$
ESCAP programme of work	1 000
SIAP	1 000

332. *China.* The delegation of China mentioned that its Government had increased its contribution to ESCAP since 2000 and announced that the Government of China would make the following contributions for 2006:

ESCAP technical cooperation trust funds and special projects	RMB 1 000 000 and $150 000
	$
APCTT	20 000
SIAP	40 000

[4] *A Future Within Reach: Reshaping Institutions in a Region of Disparities to Meet the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.II.F.27).

The delegation of China reconfirmed its pledge of $3.8 million in support of UNAPCAEM over a five-year period. With regard to the other ESCAP regional institutions and projects, the Government of China would make further decisions in the future and provide information about them in due course. The delegation of China expressed its Government's intention to increase its contribution to ESCAP gradually.

333. *India.* The delegation of India indicated that its Government would make the following contributions for 2006:

	$
APCTT	200 000 (equivalent in rupees)
UNAPCAEM	15 000
SIAP	15 000
CAPSA	10 000

The Government of India would also contribute Rs 5.87 million (equivalent to $131,734) to a new APCTT project on building capacity for "scouting", documentation, database development and dissemination of "green" grass-roots innovations in the Asian and Pacific region.

334. *Indonesia.* The delegation of Indonesia invited ESCAP to explore possible joint projects with the Non-Aligned Movement Centre for South-South Technical Cooperation, based in Jakarta, in order to address the needs of developing member countries. For 2006, the Government of Indonesia intended to provide the same level of contributions to the regional institutions as in the previous year, with the exception of CAPSA, for which an additional amount of approximately Rp 363 million would be provided for vehicles and other operational equipment, in addition to the annual contribution of Rp 767 million.

335. *Iran (Islamic Republic of).* The delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran announced that its Government would make the following contributions:

	$
ESCAP programme of work	20 000
SIAP	10 000
APCTT	10 000
UNAPCAEM	15 000

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran expressed its willingness to provide, within five years, up to $10 million, in kind and cash, for the establishment and operation of the proposed Asian and Pacific ICST-enabled disaster management centre in its territory, affiliated with ESCAP.

336. *Japan.* The delegation of Japan emphasized the importance of coordination with other United Nations agencies to avoid duplication. It announced that the Government of Japan would make the following contributions for its fiscal year 2006:

	$
ESCAP programme of work (Japan-ESCAP Cooperation Fund)	192 793
SIAP	1 695 880 (and in-kind contributions in the amount of $1,638,100)
Project on ICT policies and programmes for development	160 000

Furthermore, the Government of Japan would continue to support the technical cooperation activities of ESCAP through the Human Security Fund, focusing on social protection schemes in tsunami-affected areas, and the Human Dignity Initiative.

337. *Lao People's Democratic Republic.* The secretariat had received written notification that the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic would make the following contribution:

	$
ESCAP programme of work	2 000

338. *Macao, China.* The secretariat had received written notification that the Government of Macao, China, would make the following contribution:

	$
SIAP	15 000

339. *Malaysia.* The delegation of Malaysia announced its Government's contributions as follows:

	$
APCTT	15 000
SIAP	10 000

The Government of Malaysia would also contribute $50,000 to the Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and Southeast Asia (CCOP) and $19,436 to the Asian and Pacific Coconut Community.

340. *Mongolia.* The secretariat had received written notification that the Government of Mongolia would make the following contribution:

	$
SIAP	2 000

341. *Myanmar.* The secretariat had received written notification that the Government of Myanmar would make the following contributions:

	$
ESCAP programme of work	2 000
SIAP	1 000

342. *New Caledonia.* The secretariat had received written notification that the Government of New Caledonia would make the following contribution:

	$
Pacific Trust Fund	5 000

343. *Pakistan.* The secretariat had received written notification that the Government of Pakistan would make the following contribution:

	$
SIAP	15 000

344. *Philippines.* The delegation of the Philippines confirmed its Government's intention to continue to contribute to the regional institutions. At the time, no specific amounts could be indicated, since the Government's budgetary process had not yet been concluded.

345. *Republic of Korea.* In addition to its contribution to the Republic of Korea-ESCAP Cooperation Fund, the delegation of the Republic of Korea announced that its Government would make the following contributions:

	$
UNAPCAEM	10 000
APCTT	10 000
CAPSA	10 000
SIAP	10 000

346. *Thailand.* The delegation of Thailand announced that its Government would make the following contributions:

	$
APCTT	15 000
UNAPCAEM	15 000
CAPSA	10 000
SIAP	20 000
Trust fund for the participation of the disadvantaged economies in transition and Mongolia	2 000
Pacific Trust Fund	1 000

The Government of Thailand would also contribute $40,000 and 1,550,043 baht to CCOP, $12,000 to the Typhoon Committee and $2,000 to the Tropical Cyclones Trust Fund.

347. *Viet Nam.* The secretariat had received written notification that the Government of Viet Nam would make the same contributions as in the previous year to the ESCAP programme of work, UNAPCAEM and APCTT.

348. In concluding, the Executive Secretary noted that the secretariat had been successful in raising its technical cooperation profile during past years owing to strong support from key donors and partners and the secretariat's efforts to enhance the quality and impact of its technical cooperation projects. The secretariat thanked those Governments which had pledged their financial support to the technical cooperation work of the secretariat. It encouraged the others to consider providing both financial and technical support for the various projects for promoting regional cooperation in the economic and social sectors. The secretariat assured the Commission that every effort would be made to respond to the needs of the members and associate members in the design of the technical cooperation programme, particularly by addressing the needs of the developing member countries and territories in attaining the Millennium Development Goals.

Activities of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission

349. The Commission had before it the report of ACPR (E/ESCAP/1384 and Add.1), which had been introduced by the representative of Australia in lieu of the ACPR Rapporteur.

350. In keeping with its terms of reference, ACPR had maintained close cooperation between the members and the secretariat of the Commission, advised the Executive Secretary on issues relating to the work of ESCAP and reviewed relevant documents prior to their submission to the Commission.

351. Since the sixty-first session of the Commission, ACPR had held eight regular sessions, two informal sessions and three meetings of the Informal Working Group on Draft Resolutions. At its regular sessions, ACPR had considered a number of issues related to programme planning, monitoring and evaluation, including the report on programme performance for 2004-2005, the outcome of the review by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions of the ESCAP programme budget for 2006-2007, preparations for the strategic framework for 2008-2009 and the proposed calendar of meetings and training programmes for the period from January to December 2006.

352. ACPR had been actively involved in reviewing the outcomes of recent sessions of the Commission, in particular the report on the implementation of resolutions adopted by the Commission at its sixty-first and previous sessions. It had also worked with the secretariat in planning for the sixty-second session of the Commission and reviewing initial plans for the theme topic of the sixty-third session. ACPR had also reviewed and discussed preparations for, and outcomes of, the second sessions of the Committee on Managing Globalization, the Committee on Emerging Social Issues and the Committee on Poverty Reduction, as well as other key meetings organized by the secretariat, including the Intergovernmental Meeting to Develop the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network, held in Bangkok from 28 to 30 November 2005, the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on Sustainable Tourism Development, held in

Bali, Indonesia, from 7 to 9 December 2005, the first sessions of the Governing Councils of UNAPCAEM, APCTT and SIAP and the second session of the Governing Council of CAPSA.

353. ACPR had also debated issues related to its revitalization and had reviewed the intergovernmental mechanisms of other regional commissions. A monthly briefing by the secretariat on "ongoing ESCAP initiatives" had enabled ACPR members to comment on projects and issues during their implementation.

354. The Commission expressed appreciation for the extensive work ACPR had carried out during the previous year, including inputs for preparation of the draft strategic framework for 2008-2009 and preparations for the sixty-second session of the Commission.

355. The Commission expressed support for the important role of ACPR in ensuring a constructive and effective dialogue between ESCAP members and the secretariat, and encouraged members of the Commission to attach priority to the role of ACPR.

356. The Commission further suggested that the advice and proposals put forward by ACPR members be given serious attention and appropriate efforts made to follow the advice and carry out the proposals.

357. One delegation expressed the view that ACPR should accord increased priority to reviewing the follow-up to resolutions adopted by the Commission at previous sessions.

358. The Executive Secretary concluded by expressing his deep appreciation to ACPR members for their commitment to discussions in the Advisory Committee, and stated that he looked forward to continuing engagement in the year ahead, in particular in addressing significant challenges related to United Nations reform.

Reports of regional intergovernmental bodies

Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and Southeast Asia

359. The Commission had before it the report of the Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and Southeast Asia (CCOP), transmitted for information under a note by the secretariat (E/ESCAP/1385).

360. The Commission was informed of the activities of CCOP for 2005, which had been focused on enhanced coordination of the geoscience programmes of geoscientific institutions in member countries, continued human resources development, institutional capacity-building and greater flow of technical information between the member countries, cooperating countries and cooperating organizations.

361. A variety of cooperating countries and organizations supported activities under three CCOP sectors. In the georesources sector, activities included a petroleum policy and management project, institutional capacity-building in CCOP member countries and community and small-scale mining in Asia. In the geo-environment sector, project activities included the development of techniques on landslide hazard assessment, training of young scientists involved in volcanic hazard mitigation, coastal zone programmes and training on current issues in geoscience. For the geo-information sector, project activities to improve the management of geoscientific information included work on the *Asian Multilingual Thesaurus of Geosciences* and the development of a bibliographic database in the Southeast Asian Network for a Geoscience Information System.

362. The Commission was informed of the continuous support of the Government of Thailand and the initiatives undertaken by CCOP in collaboration with the Department of Mineral Resources of Thailand in organizing two international seminars in response to the 26 December 2004 Asian tsunami disaster. A project document had been developed focusing on tsunami hazards as part of scientific initiatives requiring urgent and concerted actions, which included risk assessment for forward planning, risk mitigation and coastal rehabilitation. The Commission was also informed that the Government of Norway supported the project on tsunami risk reduction measures with focus on land use and rehabilitation, which had commenced in 2005.

363. The Commission noted with appreciation the work of CCOP. Some delegations extended appreciation to the countries and organizations that supported CCOP, particularly the Government of Thailand through its Department of Mineral Resources for facilitating smooth and efficient operations in Bangkok.

364. The Commission was informed of the need for strengthened coordination between CCOP and the secretariat in post-tsunami risk assessment, disaster rehabilitation and mitigation efforts.

Mekong River Commission

365. The Commission had before it the report of the Mekong River Commission (MRC), transmitted for information under a note by the secretariat (E/ESCAP/1386).

366. The Commission was informed of the celebrations in 2005 marking the tenth anniversary of the Agreement on the Cooperation for the Sustainable Development of the Mekong River Basin and the establishment of the Mekong River Commission.

367. The report outlined the strategic plan for 2006-2010, which remained oriented towards "an economically prosperous, socially just and environmentally sound Mekong River Basin". The plan provided for an updated organizational, programme and

budget structure. The plan also introduced the Mekong Programme, a regional programme for the sustainable development of water and related resources in the Mekong River Basin. The Commission was informed that the Programme would enable MRC to address the development opportunities of the Mekong River Basin in a more comprehensive, balanced and sustainable manner.

368. The Commission noted with appreciation the work conducted by the Mekong River Commission in 2005 and the strong support from donors and partners, including the Flood Management and Mitigation Programme, the Navigation Programme, the Basin Development Plan and the Water Utilization Programme.

369. The Commission was informed of the decision of MRC to develop new programmes on drought management, information and knowledge management, and hydropower.

Typhoon Committee

370. The Commission had before it the report of the Typhoon Committee, transmitted for information under a note by the secretariat (E/ESCAP/1387).

371. The Typhoon Committee informed the Commission of the activities carried out by its members in 2005, including important achievements, as well as the major issues and future directions in meteorological, hydrological and disaster prevention and preparedness, and research and training.

372. It also informed the Commission of the re-establishment of two groups within the Committee: (a) the Typhoon Committee Research Coordination Group, which would continue overseeing the implementation of research and training activities, such as the Typhoon Committee fellowship scheme and roving seminar in 2006; and (b) the Working Group on Resource Mobilization, which would be responsible for the development of a resource mobilization database.

373. One delegation mentioned the need to enhance regional cooperation and exchange of information on tropical cyclone track and intensity forecasts, storm surges, destructive winds, rainfall and flood forecasting and exchange of radar images.

374. The Commission recognized the importance of the work of the Typhoon Committee and noted with appreciation the commitment and support of the Committee's members and donors. The Commission also called for the Committee to pursue closer collaboration with intergovernmental bodies.

Panel on Tropical Cyclones

375. The Commission had before it the report of the Panel on Tropical Cyclones, transmitted for information under a note by the secretariat (E/ESCAP/1388).

376. The Commission noted with satisfaction the work of the Panel in 2005 under the meteorological, hydrological, natural disaster prevention and preparedness, training and research components of its programme of work.

377. The representative of the Panel informed the Commission of the public awareness raised by the occurrence of cyclones and the related mitigation measures of the Regional Specialized Meteorological Centre for Tropical Cyclones, located in New Delhi.

378. A strong spirit of cooperation existed among Panel member countries having international river basins with regard to the exchange of hydrological data, especially for flood forecasting. The Panel urged that such cooperation continue in order to further improve flood forecasting services for the better protection of people's lives.

379. The Commission was informed of the Panel's request to WMO to upgrade the Global Telecommunication System (GTS) in some Panel member countries in order to address the requirements for tsunami-related information exchange in the Indian Ocean Rim. The Commission noted with satisfaction that financial support for GTS upgrade had been obtained for three countries, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Pakistan.

380. The Commission was also informed of the Panel's request to WMO and ESCAP to continue to support activities of the Panel in the key areas of meteorology, hydrology, disaster prevention and preparedness, training and research. It recognized the importance of tsunami early warning as part of the common efforts to promote multi-hazard early warning systems in the region and requested that WMO, ESCAP and international organizations increase their assistance to the Panel and to its members in that respect.

381. The Commission was informed that the economic impact of natural disasters had shown a marked upward trend for several decades. Developing countries, especially the least developed countries, were particularly affected by those hazards, which increased their vulnerability and set back their economic and social growth.

382. One delegation informed the Commission of the experience of its Government in mitigating the effects of cyclones and reducing casualties, and offered to contribute more to efforts in that area.

Date, venue and theme topic of the sixty-third session of the Commission

383. The Commission had before it document E/ESCAP/1389. In view of the significance of 2007 as the sixtieth anniversary year of the founding of the regional commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Commission decided to keep open the date and venue of its sixty-third session for further consideration by

Governments of ESCAP members that might have an interest in hosting the session. In that regard, the secretariat would consult with ACPR and aim for decisions that could be submitted to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session in July 2006.

384. With regard to the theme topic, the deliberations focused on two options: (a) "Development of health systems in Asia and the Pacific" and (b) "Harnessing economic growth for achieving the Millennium Development Goals".

385. A total of 10 delegations expressed views favouring a more focused formulation that would address the alarming lack of progress on the health-related Millennium Development Goals in the Asian and Pacific region, despite the success achieved in poverty reduction, as had been identified in the joint ESCAP-UNDP-ADB report, *A Future Within Reach: Reshaping Institutions in a Region of Disparities to Meet the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific*.

386. Two delegations suggested that the title of the theme topic for the sixty-third session reflect the importance of economic growth. They contended that economic growth, as the engine of development, was necessary for the development of health systems and should be mentioned specifically in the title of the theme study for the sixty-third session. They also felt that, without a reference to "economic growth" in the title, the theme study could run the risk of being reduced to a debate around social issues. Those delegations in favour of a more sharply focused theme topic pointed out that a formulation that simply combined "economic growth" and "development of health systems" for achievement of the Millennium Development Goals was too broad and of limited value as a theme topic for a session of the Commission.

387. The Commission agreed on the following as the theme topic for its sixty-third session: "Development of health systems in the context of enhancing economic growth towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific".

Ministerial Round Table on Enhancing Regional Cooperation in Infrastructure Development, including that Related to Disaster Management

388. The Ministerial Round Table was divided into two sessions. The first session covered a presentation by the Executive Secretary of ESCAP on the theme topic "Enhancing regional cooperation in infrastructure development, including that related to disaster management". The second session covered presentations by H.E. Mr. Maatia Toafa, Prime Minister of Tuvalu; H.E. Mr. M. Saifur Rahman, Minister for Finance and Planning, Bangladesh; H.E. Mr. Kaliopate Tavola, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Fiji; H.E. Mr. Sarath Amunugama, Minister of Public Administration and Home Affairs, Sri Lanka; Mr. Roestam Sjarief, Secretary General, Department of Public Works, Indonesia; and Mr. Zhang Wanhai, Permanent Representative of China to ESCAP.

389. In his presentation, the Executive Secretary summarized the contents of the theme study, highlighting the importance of infrastructure development in enhancing economic growth and social development, and the crucial role of regional cooperation. The Executive Secretary elaborated the two-track approach of ESCAP to regional cooperation. Under the first track, ESCAP had undertaken a number of cross-border initiatives in the areas of transport, energy, ICT and water.

390. Under the second track, dealing with regional financial cooperation, the Executive Secretary discussed financing needs for infrastructure development, the resource gap and the options available to bridge that gap. Four options were suggested for financial intermediation of surplus savings in the region:

(a) Expansion of the mandate of the Asian Development Bank to focus more on infrastructure financing;

(b) Expansion of the Asian Bond Fund, in terms of both geographical coverage and size;

(c) Operationalization, reinvigoration and consolidation of existing subregional banks and funds;

(d) Establishment of a new institution, that is, an Asian investment bank along the lines of the European Investment Bank.

391. The Executive Secretary suggested the formation of an intergovernmental task force to evaluate those options further. Presentations by other panelists followed that of the Executive Secretary.

392. In his presentation, the Prime Minister of Tuvalu pointed to the crucial role of infrastructure, especially maritime and ICT infrastructure, in the socio-economic development of developing countries, especially small island developing countries. The Prime Minister drew the attention of the Round Table to the constraints faced by the island developing countries. The constraints included their small size, which prevented the exploitation of economies of scale, and their small and dispersed populations, fragile environment and proneness to natural disasters. The Prime Minister made special mention of regional cooperation in disaster management and post-disaster recovery, and informed the Round Table of the lack of access of island countries to finance from international capital markets. The Prime Minister suggested that regional cooperation could help overcome those constraints.

393. The Minister for Finance and Planning of Bangladesh mentioned that economic development was dependent on macroeconomic stability, an enabling

environment and physical and social infrastructure. The resources available for infrastructure development, such as energy and transport, were insufficient, except in the case of some developed countries, and more resources needed to be generated, especially from internal sources. Investment in transport infrastructure, especially rural roads, enhanced growth and reduced poverty. In the context of regional cooperation, the Minister identified a number of difficulties in the area of power and water which needed to be addressed. The Minister offered assistance to other countries on best practices for disaster management, of which Bangladesh had extensive experience.

394. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Fiji identified several aspects of regional cooperation which were important for island developing countries, consisting of transport networks, including cooperation with the commercial sector in airline industries, waste management and the development of biofuel. With regard to infrastructure financing, the Minister highlighted the importance of public-private partnerships and the concept of build, operate and transfer and stated the need for new and innovative ideas in the area of infrastructure financing.

395. The Secretary General of the Department of Public Works of Indonesia highlighted the challenges and policy direction in human settlements and infrastructure development, as well as the principle of "infrastructure for all", which Indonesia applied to economic growth, development and social welfare. The Secretary General observed that the paucity of funds from budgetary sources was creating a large gap in the area of infrastructure investment and maintenance. Furthermore, Indonesia was following three modalities for financing infrastructure projects: market-based financing, public financing of pro-poor infrastructure and promoting public-private partnerships. The Secretary General requested that ESCAP work towards strengthening financing modalities for infrastructure investment and forge close collaboration with international agencies and development banks.

396. The Minister of Public Administration and Home Affairs of Sri Lanka mentioned the lack of financial resources as a major constraint on infrastructure development and explained the difficulties of developing countries in accessing international capital markets. The region's capital was flowing out of the region for lack of secure investment opportunities. The attention of the Round Table was drawn to regional mechanisms to mobilize resources for financing infrastructure. The Minister emphasized the importance of bridging the gap between potential investors and borrowers by providing guarantees and co-financing and by putting in place risk mitigation mechanisms. The Minister highlighted the importance of improved transparency, accountability and sound macroeconomic policies, and the need for a "blue-ribbon" committee to examine the possibility of enhancing the availability of funds, as well as ensuring that recipients satisfied the basic disciplines regarding investment.

397. The Permanent Representative of China to ESCAP noted that infrastructure development was known for being investment-consuming and having long pay-back periods. The shortage of funds for infrastructure development was a common problem in Asian and Pacific countries, particularly developing countries. The region needed to generate new ideas and open diverse channels for fund-raising in order to ensure adequate investment in infrastructure. The Permanent Representative suggested that the potential of existing fund-raising channels be tapped first. However, Governments, using their credibility as a guarantee, could issue construction treasury bonds in order to mobilize private capital. In addition, ADB and other multilateral institutions which had long experience in financing projects should engage in infrastructure development and provide more financial support. The Permanent Representative highlighted the gradual establishment of market-based fund-raising channels, and suggested that any reform with regard to fund-raising mechanisms be a gradual process of exploration and suited to national conditions.

398. During the discussion, it was requested that the secretariat continue its activities to improve access to energy, safe drinking water and sanitation, as those constituted the basis for sustainable development and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. That could be accomplished through public-private partnership projects and programmes in water and energy infrastructure development. In view of the impact on the environment, the Round Table noted the need to take into account environmental sustainability and the eco-efficiency of resources when developing infrastructure.

399. The Round Table recognized the importance of measures to improve the efficiency of the energy sector, and underlined the role of renewable energy, including biofuel and its role with regard to rural development. It requested that the secretariat facilitate the exchange of experience and knowledge on clean technology, undertake research and provide policy advice for the development of strategic plans for energy efficiency and renewable energy. The Round Table noted the proposal for a regional energy cooperation mechanism for better planning and coordination in order to strengthen energy security in the region.

400. The Round Table noted that current investments in water infrastructure were considerably lower than needed because of low returns, long-term payment periods and the lack of a conducive environment for private investors. Thus, there was a need to improve commercial viability in developing certain types of infrastructure. The Round Table emphasized that the secretariat needed to promote and facilitate information and technology exchange on best practices and build capacity in water treatment and waste management, with opportunities for private-sector involvement. It underlined the importance of the work of the secretariat in strengthening regional and

subregional cooperation for enhancing infrastructure development. Particular attention was drawn to the Asia-Pacific Water Forum, which was an important regional initiative for water resource management and conservation.

401. The Round Table was informed of the activities of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia, which enhanced the integration of Central Asia into the global economy through subregional cooperation in water and energy conservation, and trade.

402. The Round Table recognized that direct investment by Governments remained the main source of funds for infrastructure development. It noted the potential for fund-raising by Governments, using mechanisms such as improvements in the efficiency of fiscal systems, government guarantees, the issuance of long-term construction treasury bonds to attract private and corporate capital and the use of policy incentives to attract foreign investment. The Round Table recognized that the development of domestic financial markets was a key to raising capital. However, that was a gradual process which needed to take into account the conditions prevailing in different countries. One delegation noted that the system of its Government had started with completely central budgetary planning, moved to market allocation supplemented by central planning, and was currently using a basically market-based model for many of its infrastructure projects, including the development of high-speed rail.

403. In view of the increasingly rapid development of transport in the ESCAP region, continuous policy guidance was required at the ministerial level to address emerging issues and promote regional integration. Support was expressed for a proposal for secretariat assistance in convening regional meetings of ministers of transport on a biennial basis, following a similar approach to that of the European Conference of Ministers of Transport.

404. The Round Table noted that ICT constituted basic infrastructure that required a large sum of capital investment. As the private sector should play a leading role in its development, public-private partnership was essential. To encourage such partnership, one country requested that the secretariat initiate a forum on ICT infrastructure.

405. The Round Table noted the special limitations faced by the Pacific island countries, as their fragile environment made them susceptible to natural disasters and their size prevented them from realizing economies of scale in infrastructure development. Regional cooperation could overcome some of those limitations, especially in the area of telecommunication. In that context, the Round Table recommended that the secretariat develop a regional mechanism to manage natural disasters, including a regional multi-hazard early warning system.

406. The Round Table recognized that the Asian and Pacific region was prone to natural disasters. The application of appropriate technology, such as radar and satellite systems, and telemetering, was one means of alleviating the destructive effects of natural disasters. It was requested that the secretariat play a more active role in enhancing regional cooperation in the establishment of early warning systems among vulnerable countries and work towards enhancing system coherence among them and ensuring more effective early warning of natural disasters.

407. The Round Table noted that there were many organizations and national centres in the region dealing with natural disasters and expressed concern over the establishment of a new institution for that purpose. Some delegations requested that the secretariat pay attention to effective coordination among existing organizations and conduct a study on the need for the region and individual countries to avoid duplication.

408. The Round Table strongly supported the development of public-private partnerships in the development of infrastructure. It noted that there were many obstacles to such participation, including the following:

(a) Lack of conducive and transparent legal frameworks for private-sector involvement in infrastructure projects;

(b) Inadequate technical and administrative planning of projects submitted for funding;

(c) Constant revision of technical and administrative arrangements relating to the implementation of projects, which led to delays that created difficulties for funding agencies;

(d) Abandonment of, or long-standing delays in, major projects;

(e) Delays in procurement and finding the requisite project elements, such as land, water, power and environmental approval for foreign-funded projects;

(f) A slow-moving bureaucracy which hindered implementation;

(g) Corruption and lack of transparency.

409. On the subject of corruption, one delegation urged members and associate members to implement the United Nations Convention against Corruption. It reiterated that putting good governance principles into action through competition and objective predetermined criteria in decision-making, and the adoption of measures that were effective in preventing corruption, could go a long way in the process of mobilizing resources for infrastructure development. The Round Table requested that the secretariat undertake activities designed to assist members and associate members in addressing those issues.

410. Two delegations drew attention to the investment needs of the region, which were very large. The shortfall in resources or the infrastructure gap could be $180-220 billion per year. While acknowledging

that there were significant unmet investment needs in the region, one delegation noted that a quantification of those needs signifying the infrastructure gap might not be precise as there were too many variables that were influenced by the investment regimes.

411. The Round Table discussed alternative modalities for bridging the financing gap. It suggested that the mobilization of all types of resources, such as trade, private-sector and human resources, in addition to financial resources, was necessary. It observed that strengthening the mandate of existing institutions, especially that of ADB, as suggested by the secretariat, could be an effective option in view of the cost involved in establishing a new institution. The Round Table noted the view that a cautious approach needed to be taken when considering the establishment of a new institution, so as not to duplicate the activities of existing institutions and to avoid the risk that a new institution would crowd out the private financing of infrastructure. It was suggested that a detailed study be conducted to analyse the pros and cons of such an institution. The Round Table also discussed the option of expanding the Asian Bond Fund to stop capital outflow, so that the region's savings could be kept within the region.

412. It was further suggested that ESCAP undertake a study on best practices for obtaining funds from international markets and provide technical assistance to countries when requested. The study could be undertaken by an intergovernmental task force. However, some delegations held the view that the establishment of such a task force could be premature. The Round Table suggested that the ESCAP secretariat study all new initiatives for fund-raising carefully and put forward feasible proposals, making use of available information and expert resources.

413. The Executive Secretary summarized the discussion and stated that ESCAP had put forward four options for financing infrastructure investment. The Executive Secretary emphasized that ESCAP was neutral with regard to those proposals. If the member States provided ESCAP with the requisite mandate, it could conduct further detailed and elaborate technical studies on those options and report back to the Commission.

Special session on the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network

414. The Executive Secretary of ESCAP gave a brief presentation concerning the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network as an example of regional cooperation in infrastructure development.

Other matters

Special briefing on avian influenza

415. The Commission was briefed by Dr. David Nabarro, Senior United Nations Coordinator for Avian and Human Influenza, on the implications of the avian influenza situation for ESCAP members and associate members. The Coordinator explained the reasons why avian influenza was of critical importance to health and economies and why a strategic, multipronged approach was necessary to tackle the disease. The Coordinator introduced a template for formulating an integrated country plan for the prevention and management of pandemics.

416. The briefing covered the need for important supportive action, financial assistance and identifying the critical factors required for achieving results in controlling avian influenza. The need for comprehensive in-country, intercountry and inter-agency coordination networks was highlighted. The Commission expressed appreciation of the presentation and commented on issues related to the development of vaccines and diagnostics, as well as on the difficulty of enforcing biosecurity in countries with large numbers of small-scale and backyard farmers.

Chapter IV

RESOLUTIONS AND OTHER DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE COMMISSION AT ITS SIXTY-SECOND SESSION

A. Resolutions

62/1. Achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the ESCAP region[1]

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000 on the United Nations Millennium Declaration,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 60/1 of 16 September 2005 on the 2005 World Summit Outcome, in which the Heads of State and Government strongly reiterated their determination to ensure the timely and full realization of the development goals and objectives agreed at the major United Nations conferences and summits, including those agreed at the Millennium Summit, described as the Millennium Development Goals, which have helped to galvanize efforts towards poverty eradication,

Bearing in mind the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development,

Recalling its resolution 60/1 of 28 April 2004 on the Shanghai Declaration, in which it welcomed the achievements of the region in economic and social development, including progress made in achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration and the outcomes and final documents of major United Nations summits and international conferences,

Recalling also the Jakarta Declaration on Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific: The Way Forward 2015, adopted on 5 August 2005 at the Regional Ministerial Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific: The Way Forward 2015,

Taking note of document E/ESCAP/1363 on the implementation of the Jakarta Declaration on Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific: The Way Forward 2015 and document E/ESCAP/1382 on implications of the 2005 World Summit Outcome for the work of ESCAP,

Noting the Declaration on the New Asian African Strategic Partnership adopted by the Asian and African Heads of State and Government at the Asian-African Summit, held in Jakarta in April 2005, as well as the Joint Ministerial Statement on the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership Plan of Action, which could play an important role in enhancing solidarity and interregional cooperation,

Welcoming the holding of the High-Level Forum on the Health Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific in Tokyo on 21 and 22 June 2005 and the initiative of the Government of Japan to host the Fourth Japan-Pacific Islands Forum Summit Meeting in Okinawa, Japan, in May 2006, and aware that, at the previous Japan-Pacific Islands Forum Summit Meeting, the Okinawa Initiative: Regional Development Strategy for a More Prosperous and Safer Pacific and the Joint Action Plan were adopted to translate the Millennium Development Goals, and other principles and commitments, into regional initiatives,

Recalling the Shanghai Agenda on Poverty Reduction, adopted at the Global Conference on Scaling up Poverty Reduction, held in Shanghai in May 2004, and recognizing that the establishment of the China International Poverty Reduction Center aims to facilitate the exchange and spread of experiences and lessons on poverty reduction in the region and worldwide,

Recognizing that the Asian and Pacific region contains two thirds of the world's over one billion poor and that strong political will and bold and decisive actions are therefore needed for achieving poverty eradication through sustainable economic growth, while committing to make poverty reduction an overarching objective of developmental partnership and cooperation in Asia and the Pacific,

Welcoming the efforts made by countries, and the progress made in the region, particularly by developing countries, in achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals and the outcomes and final documents of major United Nations summits and international conferences, but concerned about the slow and uneven progress towards achieving health and environment-related goals, and the uneven progress in education-related goals,

Also welcoming the contribution of some countries in the region to the global partnership for development, especially for the immediate problems of developing countries and the special needs of least developed countries, through various measures, including South-South cooperation, and in that regard, welcoming further the increased resources that will become available as a result of the establishment of timetables by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product for

[1] See paragraphs 124 to 144 above.

official development assistance by 2015, and inviting those developed countries that have not yet done so to make concrete efforts in this regard in accordance with their commitments,

Reaffirming that each country must take primary responsibility for its own development and that the role of national policies and development strategies cannot be overemphasized and, in that regard, welcoming efforts by countries in the region to promote good governance, foster a dynamic and well-functioning business sector, fight corruption, pursue sound macroeconomic policies and develop efficient, transparent, and accountable systems for mobilizing public resources and managing their use and inviting all Governments that have not yet done so to make concrete efforts in this regard in accordance with their commitments,

Recognizing that national efforts should be complemented by supportive global programmes, measures and policies aimed at expanding the development opportunities of developing countries, while taking into account national conditions and ensuring respect for national ownership, strategies and sovereignty,

Recognizing also the importance of regional partnership and cooperation in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and also the necessity to assist upon request those countries in need in achieving the Millennium Development Goals,

Welcoming the support provided by the various development partners, including the international financial institutions, donor countries and organizations, the private sector and civil society in achieving the Millennium Development Goals,

Recognizing the central role of the United Nations in development and the important role of ESCAP and the other regional commissions as forums for policy dialogue and consensus-building at the regional level on development-related issues, and aware of the role of the regional commissions to assist those member States seeking such support in achieving the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits, including the Millennium Development Goals, in accordance with their respective mandates,

1. *Welcomes* the efforts of those countries which have developed their national development strategies to meet the Millennium Development Goals, and invites countries that have not yet done so to make concrete efforts in that regard in accordance with their commitments, taking into account the principle that, while individual countries have primary responsibility for their own development, a conducive international environment for development is essential;

2. *Takes note with appreciation* of the regional partnership on the Millennium Development Goals between ESCAP, the United Nations Development Programme and the Asian Development Bank, which provides a consolidated regional platform to support the achievement of the Goals, as well as a series of reports published by ESCAP, the United Nations Development Programme and the Asian Development Bank which assess progress towards achieving the Goals in Asia and the Pacific; including the report on the Millennium Development Goals in the least developed countries of Asia and the Pacific;

3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, within existing regular budget resources, or through voluntary contributions, as available:

(a) Within its mandate, to strengthen regional policy dialogue for development, including on technical assistance and capacity-building, in cooperation with other bodies of the United Nations system, including the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the United Nations Development Programme, and relevant international organizations, including the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the Asian Development Bank, within their respective mandates and competence, in a coherent manner, with a view to developing appropriate ways and means to expedite achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in the ESCAP region, including by addressing pressing economic and social issues;

(b) To continue to assist, within the mandate of ESCAP and in close coordination with other entities of the United Nations system and other relevant international organizations, the members and, as appropriate, associate members in their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals through, inter alia, carrying out capacity-building and technical cooperation activities;

(c) To increase the effectiveness of the regional advisory services and regional subsidiary bodies of ESCAP in assisting member countries in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development;

(d) To continue to assess progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific in cooperation with relevant international organizations, such as the United Nations Development Programme and the Asian Development Bank, and to transmit a progress assessment to the Economic and Social Council, and especially to its annual ministerial-level substantive reviews, for consideration;

(e) To develop recommendations for achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 in the form of a regional road map, by developing and refining existing elements, and building also on related efforts or processes;

4. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-third session an item entitled

"Achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the ESCAP region" and requests the Executive Secretary to submit a report on the implementation of the present resolution.

5th meeting
12 April 2006

62/2. Jakarta Declaration on enhancing regional cooperation in infrastructure development, including that related to disaster management[2]

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Expressing deep appreciation to the Government and citizens of Indonesia for hosting the present session in Jakarta,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 55/2 of 8 September 2000 on the United Nations Millennium Declaration and 60/1 of 16 September 2005 on the 2005 World Summit Outcome, which calls for timely and full realization of the development goals and objectives agreed at the major United Nations conferences and summits, including the Millennium Development Goals, and recalling also the Monterrey Consensus,

Recalling also the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters, which was adopted at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, held in Kobe, Japan, from 18 to 22 January 2005,

Recognizing that infrastructure is a key element for realizing sustained economic growth and sustainable development to achieve the Millennium Development Goals,

Recognizing also the need to undertake infrastructure development that provides high economic and social benefits and improves the quality of life of people, particularly the poor, and those in rural and remote areas,

Recognizing further the region's high vulnerability to natural disasters that can hamper progress in infrastructure development and poverty reduction,

Welcoming the increased emphasis of the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank on infrastructure critical to growth, and their increased efforts to catalyse private-sector investment and public-private partnerships,

Recalling the deliberations of the Commission at its sixty-first session, held in Bangkok in May 2005, which focused on financing for development, and underscoring the need to follow up its outcomes through strengthened and concrete regional cooperation on infrastructure development, including that related to disaster management,

Recalling also the Jakarta Declaration on Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific: The Way Forward 2015, which calls for the promotion of affordable and environmentally sustainable infrastructure that targets the needs of the poor,

Recalling further the Bali Ministerial Joint Statement on Infrastructure Development in the Asia-Pacific Region, adopted at the Ministers' Forum on Infrastructure in the Asia-Pacific Region, held in Bali, Indonesia, in October 2003,

Recognizing the need for a particular focus on the development of infrastructure in areas affected by natural disasters,

Welcoming resolution XXIII-12 of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization of 16 April 2005, establishing the Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System, and the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System,

Underlining the strategic role of infrastructure development for improving interconnectedness and cooperation between and within countries and promoting democratic processes and empowerment,

Recognizing that diverse geographic and demographic conditions, different stages of development and existing gaps in infrastructure development within and between countries in the region pose serious challenges for some countries in achieving the Millennium Development Goals,

Recognizing also the importance of greater infrastructure development in Asia and the Pacific and acknowledging the crucial role that sound economic, regulatory and good governance policies at all levels can play in fostering the positive investment climate necessary to mobilize public and private resources for financing this development,

Recognizing further that cooperation and mobilization of resources at national, regional and international levels can play a critical role in infrastructure development,

1. *Invites* members and, as appropriate, associate members:

(a) To formulate and implement policies for infrastructure development aimed at improving the quality of life, that take into account the need to provide high economic and social benefit to poor people and people living in rural and remote areas;

(b) To endeavour to enhance the efficiency and quality of infrastructure facilities and services;

(c) To implement good public and corporate governance principles throughout the process of infrastructure development, through, inter alia, the provision of conducive and transparent legal

[2] See paragraphs 94 to 123 above.

frameworks for private sector involvement, and the establishment and use of appropriate systems of public procurement, based on transparency, competition and objective and predetermined criteria in decision-making that are effective in preventing corruption, without prejudice to the positions of members on these issues in other forums;

(d) To create an enabling environment for the promotion of public-private partnerships at the national and regional levels, for active and constructive participation of the private sector in infrastructure, and for the enhanced active participation of all relevant stakeholders in infrastructure development;

(e) To develop infrastructure development policies and strategies, taking into account safety and environmental concerns as well as geographic characteristics;

(f) To promote national and regional efforts to increase and sustain public and private resources for infrastructure development based on sustainable development principles;

(g) To strengthen national and regional preparedness in disaster risk management and response capability through education, training and the sharing of expertise, information and best practices, including through the United Nations "White Helmets Initiative";

(h) To strengthen regional cooperation on infrastructure development by improving the effectiveness of existing regional and subregional initiatives in this field;

(i) To examine and promote the use of microfinance for infrastructure development;

2. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, within existing regular budget resources, or through voluntary contributions, as available:

(a) To promote appropriate instruments and modalities for enhancing regional cooperation in infrastructure development through, inter alia, capacity-building, technical cooperation activities and the promotion of the interoperability, interconnectedness and intermodality components of infrastructure development, including maritime infrastructure, as appropriate;

(b) To forge closer cooperation with United Nations bodies, development agencies and multilateral financing institutions, as well as donors, as appropriate within their respective mandates, to strengthen global partnerships for infrastructure development, including that related to disaster risk management, reconstruction and rehabilitation;

(c) To assist members and, as appropriate, associate members with developing policy responses to promote renewable and environmentally friendly energy sources, energy efficiency and related infrastructure;

(d) To continue efforts to ascertain the views of the member States to identify and address the investment needs and priorities of members, and, as appropriate, of associate members, in infrastructure development, including that which contributes towards the integration of regional infrastructure;

(e) To report to the Commission at its sixty-fourth session on the implementation of the present Declaration.

5th meeting
12 April 2006

62/3. Implementation of the Plan of Action for Sustainable Tourism Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase II (2006-2012) and the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Tourism Development[3]

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Welcoming the successful outcome of the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on Sustainable Tourism Development, held in Bali, Indonesia, in December 2005, which adopted the Bali Declaration on Sustainable Tourism Development and the Plan of Action for Sustainable Tourism Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase II (2006-2012) including its Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Tourism Development (2006-2012),

Stressing the enormous potential of sustainable tourism for socio-economic development and poverty eradication, including as a main source of foreign exchange earnings and employment generation in both urban and rural areas across the region,

Noting that the international community is attaching special importance to tourism as reflected in a number of global initiatives, including the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, 2002, the Brussels Declaration and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010, the Global Code of Ethics on Tourism adopted at the thirteenth session of the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization, and the Yogyakarta Declaration on Cultural Tourism, Local Communities and Poverty Alleviation of 9 February 2006 adopted at the World Tourism Organization International Conference on Cultural Tourism and Local Communities, held in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, from 8 to 10 February 2006,

Emphasizing that tourism, based on the principle of sustainable development, is an important means to manage environmental and cultural concerns effectively while contributing to economic growth and promoting social development,

[3] See paragraphs 200 to 203 above.

Recognizing the significant contribution of sustainable tourism development to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, especially those relating to poverty reduction, gender equality and empowerment of women, environmental conservation, global partnerships for development and the special needs of least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States,

Acknowledging the satisfactory implementation of and lessons learned from the first phase of the Plan of Action for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Asian and Pacific Region (1999-2005),

Emphasizing the importance of tourism in socio-economic development, particularly in rural areas,

Recognizing the need to further facilitate and guide the contribution of tourism to socio-economic development and to take specific action at the national and regional levels,

1. *Invites* all members and, as appropriate, associate members in the region:

(a) To participate actively in the implementation of the Bali Declaration and the Plan of Action (phase II), including the Regional Action Programme;

(b) To identify areas for action to further enhance the contribution of tourism to socio-economic development and poverty reduction using the Bali Declaration and the Plan of Action as guidelines, in accordance with the economic and social conditions prevailing in the countries of the region;

(c) To consider appointing, as appropriate, a focal point responsible for coordinating the implementation of the Plan of Action at the national level;

(d) To take measures to minimize the adverse sociocultural and environmental impacts of tourism, including the prevention of all forms of exploitation of women and children as well as the promotion of green tourism and preservation of cultural heritage by, among other measures, promoting an adequate regulatory framework;

(e) To consider measures to promote the Global Code of Ethics on Tourism of the World Tourism Organization;

(f) To support tourism-related local economic activities, including the promotion of access to capital through microfinancing and marketing schemes for micro and small enterprises;

(g) To promote women's empowerment and participation in tourism by facilitating their access to financing schemes, including enterprise grants and loans;

2. *Invites* all United Nations bodies, the World Tourism Organization and other specialized agencies concerned, multilateral and regional financial institutions, donor countries and agencies, as well as non-governmental organizations and the private sector, to provide technical and/or financial support for the implementation of the Plan of Action, including its Regional Action Programme,

3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, within existing regular budget resources, or through voluntary contributions, as available:

(a) To continue to accord priority to the secretariat's activities in the area of tourism;

(b) To take effective measures to encourage the implementation of the Regional Action Programme, the text of which is attached as an annex to the present resolution;

(c) To prepare and conduct a regional study on the role of tourism in socio-economic development, including a common approach to the monitoring of the implementation of the Plan, for submission to and consideration by the Commission at its sixty-third session, in 2007;

(d) To document and disseminate case studies and good practices, such as rural tourism, in utilizing tourism as an entry point to the poverty reduction process;

(e) To undertake activities described in the Regional Action Programme in the following five thematic areas: (i) enhancement of the role of tourism in socio-economic development and poverty reduction; (ii) facilitation of travel and the development of transport and other tourism-related infrastructure; (iii) sociocultural and environmental management of tourism; (iv) crisis and risk management in tourism; and (v) human resources development in the tourism sector;

(f) To promote regional cooperation and support subregional initiatives in the tourism sector, in particular regional networking arrangements through the Network of Asia-Pacific Education and Training Institutes in Tourism;

(g) To continue cooperation with the World Tourism Organization and other relevant organizations in implementing the above activities;

(h) To promote the participation of national experts from members and, as appropriate, associate members in ESCAP technical cooperation activities;

(i) To make efforts to enhance regional cooperation and the capacity of members and, as appropriate, associate members in promoting tourist safety, security and comfort;

(j) To report to the Commission at its sixty-fourth session on the implementation of the Plan of Action.

5th meeting
12 April 2006

Annex

REGIONAL ACTION PROGRAMME FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT (2006-2012)

The Regional Action Programme has been developed to provide support and to complement the efforts exerted at the national level within the framework of the Plan of Action for Sustainable Tourism Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase II (2006-2012). The Programme is structured around the five theme areas of the Plan, namely: (a) enhancing the role of tourism in socio-economic development and poverty reduction; (b) facilitation of travel and development of transport and other tourism-related infrastructure; (c) the sociocultural and environmental management of tourism; (d) crisis and risk management in tourism; and (e) human resources development in the tourism sector.

The Programme has been designed to be "results-oriented" and as such is broadly based upon a logical framework or "logframe". Within each subprogramme, the headings include the objective, expected accomplishments, actions and indicators of achievement. The "actions" relate to the specific actions, activities or outputs of the organizations supporting the implementation of the second phase of the Plan of Action. The "expected accomplishments" relate to the capacities built, knowledge imparted, skills improved and networks developed by, and within the "manageable interest" of, the organizations, and the "objectives" relate to what the principal stakeholders do with the increased capacities, knowledge, skills and networks. The "indicators of achievement" are those of the organizations.

All concerned United Nations agencies, international and regional organizations, development assistance agencies and non-governmental and other organizations involved in tourism are invited to contribute to the implementation of the Regional Action Programme. It is recognized that in order for the Programme to be effective, coordination and cooperation are necessary among these agencies and organizations. In this respect, they are encouraged to convene ad hoc inter-agency meetings in association with other tourism-related meetings to discuss regional concerns about issues relating to sustainable tourism development and to keep implementation of the Programme under review. Such inter-agency meetings would also provide the opportunity to refine the Regional Action Programme as required, so that planned activities and outputs remain relevant to the priority needs of the countries.

Theme 1. Enhancing the role of tourism in socio-economic development and poverty reduction

Introduction

Tourism plays a significant role in socio-economic development, poverty reduction and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. This role can be enhanced considerably through increased understanding of the linkages between tourism, development and poverty reduction, the introduction or improvement of the policy environment for the sector, and the implementation of appropriate tourism programmes and projects.

Objective

To enhance the role of tourism in socio-economic development and poverty reduction.

Expected accomplishment

An increase in (a) understanding of the linkages between tourism development and poverty reduction, (b) the capacity to improve the policy environment for the sector, and (c) the capacity to implement appropriate tourism programmes and projects of policymakers and other stakeholders.

Actions

(1) Analytical studies on linkages and transmission mechanisms between mainstream tourism and poverty reduction as well as targeted interventions and poverty reduction.

(2) Identification of the contribution of tourism to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and its targets.

(3) Development of indicators and guidelines on measuring the contribution of tourism to poverty reduction.

(4) Documentation of case studies and good practices in utilizing tourism as an entry point to the poverty reduction process.

(5) Dissemination of the principal outcomes of the above studies, indicators and guidelines through publications and the Internet, policy advocacy and dialogue, knowledge networking, and training and advisory services.

(6) Facilitation of subregional initiatives in also promoting neighbouring countries as single tourism destinations.

(7) Promotion of poverty-oriented tourism along major transport corridors, including the Asian Highway, and railway tourism, especially along the Trans-Asian Railway. These actions would be focused on providing a geographical spread of employment, especially to rural and remote areas located far from the main centres of economic

activity where there may be limited alternatives for economic development, for example, highway service centres, community-based road stations, such as *dhabas* and *michi-no-eki* and highway oases.

(8) Capacity-building activities, including forums in which to share experience and good practices in enhancing the contribution of tourism to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Indicator of achievement

Countries initiating tourism programmes and projects that can contribute effectively to overall socio-economic development and poverty reduction.

Theme 2. Facilitation of travel and development of other tourism-related infrastructure

Introduction

The provision of safe, convenient and economical transport and other tourism-related infrastructure is a key factor for the success of tourism. For many countries in Asia and the Pacific, inadequate infrastructure is a significant constraint on tourism development. Infrastructure that does not cater adequately for the needs of people with disabilities, including infants and the elderly, excludes many destinations from this promising market. Procedures for the issuance of visas as well as other border-crossing issues also have a direct impact on the number of tourist arrivals. In order to further expand tourism, countries need to provide adequate infrastructure to support tourism development and make procedures for the issuance of visas and border formalities easier and more efficient.

Objectives

(1) To improve procedures for the issuance of visas, border-crossing and customs and security formalities.

(2) To enhance countries' capabilities to facilitate travel through the coordinated development of tourism-related infrastructure.

(3) To improve access to tourism-related activities for people with disabilities.

(4) To develop physical infrastructure for the joint benefit of tourists, travellers and local communities.

Expected accomplishment

An increased awareness of policymakers of the physical and non-physical barriers to travel and tourism and development of policies to remove such barriers; an increased capacity to develop tourism-related physical infrastructure; and improved physical infrastructure for local communities.

Actions

(1) Identification of areas of improvement for visa requirements and border-crossing formalities for tourists and travellers.

(2) Guidelines and documentation of good practices on the facilitation of the cross-border movements of tourists, including the application of information technologies.

(3) The identification of regional transport infrastructure and service improvements that could provide improved access for travellers and tourists.

(4) Guidelines and case studies on the development of physical infrastructure for the joint benefit of tourists, travellers and local communities.

(5) Promotion of barrier-free tourism for people with disabilities.

(6) Dissemination of the principal outcomes and capacity-building activities related to the above actions.

Indicators of achievement

(1) Countries initiating projects to develop tourism-related infrastructure.

(2) Countries initiating measures to improve facilities for barrier-free tourism for people with disabilities.

(3) Countries adopting simplified procedures for the issuance of visas, border formalities and customs regulations.

Theme 3. Sociocultural and environmental management of tourism

Introduction

While tourism can be a useful tool for the conservation of the natural environment and the preservation of cultural heritage, if not managed properly it can have adverse sociocultural and environmental impacts. In this context, there is a crucial need to enhance the capabilities of countries to minimize the adverse impacts of tourism while expanding its positive role in development.

Objective

To strengthen the capabilities of countries to manage the sociocultural and environmental impacts of tourism and enhance its positive role in development.

Expected accomplishment

An increased capacity to implement programmes which can manage the adverse

sociocultural and environmental impacts of tourism effectively and enhance its positive role in development.

Actions

(1) Promotion of tourism as a means of creating "markets" for public goods such as biodiversity, the environment, the natural and built heritage, and culture.

(2) Investigation of means of financing environmental protection and the preservation of the cultural heritage in tourism destinations, including the channelling of government and private sector revenues from tourism to such protection and preservation.

(3) Promotion of sustainable and efficient use of energy and water resources in the tourism industry.

(4) Promotion of public-private partnerships in the sociocultural and environmental management of tourism.

(5) Promotion of corporate social responsibilities and codes of practice in the tourism sector.

(6) Dissemination of principal outcomes and capacity-building activities related to the above actions.

Indicator of achievement

Countries integrating sociocultural and environmental considerations into tourism planning and development and initiating programmes aimed at managing the adverse impacts of tourism on the natural environment, culture and civil society and enhancing its positive role.

Theme 4. Crisis and risk management in tourism

Introduction

In recent years, the tourism industry has been severely affected by violent incidents, health-related crises and natural disasters. These incidents have had an enormous impact on tourism, creating widespread fear and uncertainty among potential travellers. Many countries in Asia and the Pacific have suffered a sharp drop in tourist arrivals with the resultant loss of tourism-related jobs and a decline in foreign exchange earnings. There is an urgent need to strengthen the capability of countries to manage crises and risks that affect the tourism industry as well as those employed directly and indirectly in the industry.

Objective

To enhance the capability of countries to manage the crises and risks that affect the tourism industry and those employed directly and indirectly in the industry.

Expected accomplishment

An increased capacity to implement effective measures to manage the crises and risks that affect tourism and those employed directly and indirectly in the industry.

Actions

(1) Review and refinement of guidelines and manuals on crisis and risk management in the tourism industry.

(2) Documentation of case studies and good practices on crisis and risk management in the tourism industry.

(3) Analytical and case studies on minimizing the employment and income generation risks to poorer sectors of the community that are associated with tourism.

(4) Dissemination of principal outcomes and capacity-building activities related to the above actions.

(5) Close cooperation, nationally, regionally and internationally, in managing crises and risks that affect the tourism industry.

Indicators of achievement

(1) Government tourism agencies and tourism enterprises initiating systematic crisis management measures, including preparation of a crisis management plan, strengthening safety measures and training.

(2) Countries taking specific action to assist in the management of risks faced by those employed directly or indirectly in the tourism industry.

Theme 5. Human resources development in the tourism sector through regional networking

Introduction

The availability of skilled and trained manpower is a crucial element in the successful long-term development and sustainability of a tourism destination. The need to develop the required human resources in various segments of the tourism industry has become urgent as a consequence of the rapid growth in tourism. Some of the constraints and problems related to human resources development can be tackled more effectively through closer cooperation among the countries of the region, since individual countries possess certain strengths and expertise that can be usefully shared with other countries.

Objective

To promote regional cooperation in human resources development in the tourism sector.

Expected accomplishment

An increase in cooperation among countries in the region in human resources development in the tourism sector through APETIT.

Actions

(1) Dissemination of information on tourism education and training through the APETIT website and newsletter and preparation of (a) a directory of APETIT expertise, (b) a directory of student and staff exchange, (c) an inventory of research priorities and (d) an inventory of scholarships offered by APETIT member institutes.

(2) Training of (a) government tourism officials, (b) lecturers/trainers in tourism education/training institutes and (c) employees in the tourism industry and advisory services utilizing expertise available in APETIT member institutes.

(3) Forums to consider specific issues related to human resources development in the tourism sector.

Indicators of achievement

(1) Increased membership in APETIT.

(2) Countries participating in the cooperation activities of APETIT.

62/4. Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network[4]

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recognizing the vital role of transport in sustaining and promoting economic and social development and regional integration in the era of globalization,

Recognizing also the role of railway transport as an important component of the integrated, international, intermodal transport network, as envisioned in the Seoul Declaration on Infrastructure Development in Asia and the Pacific, adopted by the Ministerial Conference on Infrastructure, held in Seoul from 12 to 17 November 2001, to ensure the smooth movement of people and goods in the region and between Asia and Europe for the development of the region's economy, trade and tourism,

Recalling the recommendation of that Ministerial Conference, as endorsed by the Commission at its fifty-eighth session, to develop an inter-governmental agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway network, and the preparation of a draft agreement at a regional meeting held in Bangkok on 22 and 23 November 2004, and subsequent negotiations on the draft agreement through a series of subregional expert group meetings on the Trans-Asian Railway,

Emphasizing the importance of full, timely and effective implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries, which was adopted at the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation, held in Almaty, Kazakhstan, on 28 and 29 August 2003, and acknowledging that the Trans-Asian Railway network, along with the Asian Highway network, provides transit transport opportunities,

Appreciating the commitment of member countries to coordinated development of the regional transport network as demonstrated through the rapid entry into force of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network on 4 July 2005, bearing in mind that the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway networks could provide an important contribution to the integrated international intermodal transport network,

Appreciating also the active participation of ESCAP members and railway organizations, in close collaboration with international organizations, in the successful development of the Trans-Asian Railway network and the implementation of demonstration runs of container block-trains along its northern corridor,

Noting the important progress achieved concerning the development, formalization and operationalization of the Trans-Asian Railway during the course of three meetings held in Moscow from 26 to 30 September 2005,

Welcoming the finalization of the draft intergovernmental agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway network by the Intergovernmental Meeting for Developing the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network, held in Bangkok from 28 to 30 November 2005,

Bearing in mind the implementation schedule of the draft intergovernmental agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway network, as endorsed by the Commission at its sixty-first session, proposing its adoption at the sixty-second session, in April 2006, with a view to a formal signing ceremony being organized at the Ministerial Conference on Transport to be held later in 2006,

Expressing its appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Korea for its valuable support in the development and operationalization of the Trans-Asian Railway network and the support provided in the preparation for, and convening of, the Intergovernmental Meeting,

[4] See paragraphs 191 to 196 above.

Expressing its appreciation to the Government of Indonesia for hosting the sixty-second session of the Commission in April 2006, during which the special session on the draft intergovernmental agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway network is being organized,

Welcoming the proposal of the Government of the Republic of Korea to host the signing ceremony for the agreement during the Ministerial Conference on Transport in Busan, Republic of Korea, which will be held from 6 to 11 November 2006,

Convinced that the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network will strengthen regional cooperation among member countries to promote international trade, tourism and economic development through coordinated development of the transport network and have a substantial positive impact on the region by helping to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000,

1. *Adopts* the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network, the text of which is contained in the annex to the present resolution;

2. *Invites* all relevant members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific to become parties to the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network in order to ensure its rapid entry into force;

3. *Invites* the international and regional financing institutions and multilateral and bilateral donors to consider providing further financial and technical support for the development and operationalization of the Trans-Asian Railway network;

4. *Invites* international organizations to continue to collaborate with members of ESCAP to promote the development and operationalization of the Trans-Asian Railway network;

5. *Encourages* landlocked developing countries and their transit neighbours to work together to enable the Trans-Asian Railway and Asian Highway networks to provide further tangible transit transport opportunities within the scope of the Almaty Programme of Action;

6. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, within existing regular budget resources, or through voluntary contributions, as available:

(a) To facilitate member countries in the process of becoming parties to the Agreement;

(b) To accord priority to the development of the Trans-Asian Railway within the ESCAP programme of work;

(c) To collaborate effectively with international and regional financing institutions, multilateral and bilateral donors and international organizations for the development and operationalization of the Trans-Asian Railway network;

(d) To continue to work towards the development of an integrated, international, intermodal transport network in Asia, including through the development of appropriate intermodal facilities and through the planning and implementation of demonstration runs of container block-trains on other corridors of the Trans-Asian Railway network, as appropriate;

(e) To continue to work towards the development of an integrated Euro-Asian transport system, in cooperation with the Economic Commission for Europe and other interested organizations, as appropriate;

(f) To discharge effectively the functions of the secretariat of the Agreement;

(g) To report to the Commission at its sixty-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

5th meeting
12 April 2006

Annex

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT ON THE TRANS-ASIAN RAILWAY NETWORK

THE CONTRACTING PARTIES,

CONSCIOUS of the need to promote and develop international rail transport in Asia and with neighbouring regions,

AWARE of the expected increase in the international transport of people and goods as a consequence of growing international trade in the ongoing process of globalization,

RECALLING the cooperation among members of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in the formulation and operationalization of the Trans-Asian Railway Network,

CONSIDERING that in order to strengthen relations and promote international trade and tourism among members of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, it is essential to develop the Trans-Asian Railway Network, including stations and container terminals of international importance, to the requirements of international transport and the environment,

KEEPING also in view the role of railway transport as an important component of an effective and efficient international intermodal transport network, especially in addressing the specific needs of landlocked and transit countries,

HAVE AGREED as follows:

Article 1

Definition of Railway Lines of International Importance

For the purposes of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network (the "Agreement"), the term "railway lines of international importance" as described in Annex I shall refer to:

a) railway lines currently used for regular international transport;

b) railway lines, either existing, under construction, or planned, that are intended to be used for regular international transport;

c) ferry links ensuring continuous transport across seas or lakes between terminals in different States or within one State;

d) border crossing points, gauge interchange stations, ferry terminals and rail-connected container terminals where Customs clearance facilities/ services are provided.

Article 2

Adoption of the Trans-Asian Railway Network

The Contracting Parties (the "Parties") hereto adopt the railway lines of international importance described in Annex I to the Agreement as a coordinated plan for the development of railway lines of international importance which they intend to be undertaken within the framework of the national programmes of the Parties.

Article 3

Development of the Trans-Asian Railway Network

The lines of the Trans-Asian Railway Network should be brought into conformity with the guiding principles related to technical characteristics described in Annex II to the Agreement.

Article 4

Procedure for signing and becoming a Party

1. The Agreement shall be open for signature by States which are members of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific at Busan, Republic of Korea, on 10 and 11 November 2006, and thereafter at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 16 November 2006 to 31 December 2008.

2. Those States may become Parties to the Agreement by:

a) Signature subject to ratification, acceptance or approval, followed by ratification, acceptance or approval; or

b) Accession.

3. Ratification, acceptance, approval or accession shall be effected by the deposit of an instrument in good and due form with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Article 5

Entry into force

1. The Agreement shall enter into force on the ninetieth day following the date on which the Governments of at least eight (8) States have consented to be bound by the Agreement pursuant to Article 4, paragraph 2 and 3.

2. For each State which deposits its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession after the date upon which the conditions for the entry into force of the Agreement have been met, the Agreement shall enter into force for that State ninety (90) days after the date of its deposit of the said instrument.

Article 6

Working Group on the Trans-Asian Railway Network

1. A Working Group on the Trans-Asian Railway Network (the "Working Group") shall be established by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific to consider the implementation of the Agreement and to consider any amendments proposed. All States which are members of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific shall be members of the Working Group.

2. The Working Group shall meet biennially. Any Party may also, by a notification addressed to the secretariat, request that a special meeting of the Working Group be convened. The secretariat shall notify all members of the Working Group of the request and shall convene a special meeting of the Working Group if not less than one third of the Parties signify their assent to the request within a period of four (4) months from the date of the notification by the secretariat.

Article 7

Procedures for amending the main text

1. The main text of the Agreement may be amended by the procedure specified in this Article.

2. Amendments to the Agreement may be proposed by any Party.

3. The text of any proposed amendment shall be circulated to all members of the Working Group by the secretariat at least forty-five (45) days before the Working Group meeting at which it is proposed for adoption.

4. An amendment shall be adopted by the Working Group by a two-thirds majority of the Parties present and voting. The amendment as adopted shall be communicated by the secretariat to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who shall circulate it to all Parties for acceptance.

5. An amendment adopted in accordance with paragraph 4 of the present Article shall enter into force twelve (12) months after it has been accepted by two-thirds of the Parties. The amendment shall enter into force with respect to all Parties except those which, before it enters into force, declare that they do not accept the amendment. Any Party that has declared that it does not accept an amendment adopted in accordance with this paragraph may at any time thereafter deposit an instrument of acceptance of such amendment with the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The amendment shall enter into force for that State twelve (12) months after the date of deposit of the said instrument.

Article 8

Procedures for amending annex I

1. Annex I to the Agreement may be amended by the procedure specified in this Article.

2. For the purpose of Article 8, a 'directly concerned Party' is a Party in whose territory the subject of the proposed amendment is located.

3. Amendments which change a border station may be proposed only by a directly concerned Party after consulting with and obtaining the written consent of the neighbouring State which shares the border to which the subject of the amendment is connected.

4. Amendments that do not change a border station may be proposed by any directly concerned Party.

5. The text of any amendment proposed by any Party shall be circulated to all members of the Working Group by the secretariat at least forty-five (45) days before the Working Group meeting at which it is proposed for adoption.

6. An amendment shall be adopted by the Working Group by a majority of the Parties present and voting. The amendment as adopted shall be communicated by the secretariat to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who shall circulate it to all Parties.

7. An amendment adopted in accordance with paragraph 6 of the present Article shall be deemed accepted if, during a period of six (6) months from the date of the notification, less than one third of the Parties notifies the Secretary-General of the United Nations of their objection to the amendment.

8. An amendment accepted in accordance with paragraph 7 of the present Article shall enter into force for all Parties three (3) months after the expiry of the period of six (6) months referred to in paragraph 7 of the present Article.

Article 9

Procedures for amending annex II

1. Annex II to the Agreement may be amended by the procedure specified in this Article.

2. Amendments may be proposed by any Party.

3. The text of any proposed amendment shall be circulated to all members of the Working Group by the secretariat at least forty-five (45) days before the Working Group meeting at which it is proposed for adoption.

4. An amendment shall be adopted by the Working Group by a majority of the Parties present and voting. The amendment as adopted shall be communicated by the secretariat to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who shall circulate it to all Parties.

5. An amendment adopted in accordance with paragraph 4 of the present Article shall be deemed accepted if during a period of six (6) months from the date of the notification, less than one third of the Parties notifies the Secretary-General of the United Nations of their objection to the amendment.

6. An amendment accepted in accordance with paragraph 5 of the present Article shall enter into force for all Parties three (3) months after the expiry of the period of six (6) months referred to in paragraph 5 of the present Article.

Article 10

Reservations

Reservations may not be made with respect to any of the provisions of the Agreement, except as provided in Article 13, paragraph 5.

Article 11

Withdrawal

Any Party may withdraw from the Agreement by written notification addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The withdrawal shall take effect twelve (12) months after the date of receipt by the Secretary-General of such notification.

Article 12

Suspension of validity

The operation of the Agreement shall be suspended if the number of Parties becomes less than eight (8) for any period of twelve (12) consecutive months. In such a situation the secretariat shall notify the Parties. The provisions of the Agreement shall again become operative if the number of Parties reaches eight (8).

Article 13

Settlement of disputes

1. Any dispute between two or more Parties which relates to the interpretation or application of the Agreement and which the Parties in dispute are unable to settle by negotiation or consultation shall be referred to conciliation if any of the Parties in dispute so requests and shall, to that end, be submitted to one or more conciliators selected by mutual agreement between the Parties in dispute. If the Parties in dispute fail to agree on the choice of conciliator or conciliators within three (3) months after the request for conciliation, any of those Parties may request the Secretary-General of the United Nations, to appoint a single independent conciliator to whom the dispute shall be submitted.

2. The recommendation of the conciliator or conciliators appointed in accordance with paragraph 1 of this Article, while not binding in character, shall become the basis of renewed consideration by the Parties in dispute.

3. By mutual agreement, the Parties in dispute may agree in advance to accept the recommendation of the conciliator or conciliators as binding.

4. Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of the present Article shall not be construed to exclude other measures for the settlement of disputes mutually agreed between the Parties in dispute.

5. Any State may, at the time of depositing its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, deposit a reservation stating that it does not consider itself bound by the provisions of the present Article relating to conciliation. Other Parties shall not be bound by the provisions of the present Article relating to conciliation with respect to any Party which has deposited such a reservation.

Article 14

Limits to the application

1. Nothing in the Agreement shall be construed as preventing a Party from taking such action, compatible with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and limited to the exigencies of the situation, as it considers necessary for its external or internal security.

2. A Party shall make every possible effort to develop the Trans-Asian Railway Network consistent with the Agreement. However, nothing in the Agreement shall be construed as acceptance of an obligation by any Party to permit the movement of goods and passenger traffic across its territory.

Article 15

Annexes

Annexes I and II to the Agreement shall form an integral part of the Agreement.

Article 16

Secretariat

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific shall be designated the secretariat of the Agreement.

Article 17

Depositary

The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall be designated the depositary of the Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, being duly authorized thereto, have signed the Agreement,

OPENED for signature on the tenth day of November two thousand and six at Busan, Republic of Korea, in a single copy in the Chinese, English and Russian languages, the three texts being equally authentic.

Annex I

TRANS-ASIAN RAILWAY NETWORK

The Trans-Asian Railway network consists of the railway lines of international importance indicated below.

The lines that form the basis for describing the Trans-Asian Railway network in each State are designated in bold with the origin and end stations and are then listed vertically. Lines branching off are described to the right of the junction station. Further branches are shown indented underneath this first branch. All lines are of equal importance within the Trans-Asian Railway Network.

When lines start or finish at a border point, the first or last stations on that line are preceded or followed by the indication in brackets of the name of the border station and the name of the neighbouring State directly concerned.

The names of stations that have specific functions on a line are followed by the indication of these functions in italics and brackets. Such functions include:

- *(border station),*
- *(break-of-gauge),*
- *(junction),*
- *(maritime connection), and*
- *(ferry terminals).*

Missing links are indicated in [square brackets].

Stations with container terminals to handle International Standards Organization (ISO) containers of at least 20-foot dimension in length and above are shown underlined.

LIST OF THE LINES IN THE TRANS-ASIAN RAILWAY NETWORK

ARMENIA

Ayrum – Niuvedi

(Sadakhlo, Georgia)

Ayrum *(border station)*

Gyumri *(junction)* → Akhuryan *(border station and break-of-gauge)* – (Dogu Kapi, Turkey)

Masis *(junction)* → Yerevan – Ijevan *(border station)* – (Barkhudarly, Azerbaijan)

↳ Gagarin – Martuni – [Jermuk – Kapan – Meghri (border station)] – (Marand, Islamic Republic of Iran)

Yeraskh *(border station)*

(Belidag – Ordubad, Azerbaijan)

Meghri

Niuvedi *(border station)*

(Agbent, Azerbaijan)

AZERBAIJAN

Yalama – Beyouk Kesik

(Samur, Russian Federation)

Yalama *(border station)*

Baku *(ferry terminal)* → (Ferry link to Caspian sea ports in *Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation* and *Turkmenistan*)

Alyat *(junction)* → Ali Bairamli *(junction)* – Astara *(border station and break-of-gauge)* – (Astara, Islamic Republic of Iran)

→ Ali Bairamli *(junction)* – Agbent *(border station)* – (Niuvedi-Meghri *(border station)*, Armenia) – Orduoad – Djulfa *(border station and break-of-gauge)* – (Djulfa, Islamic Republic of Iran)

Akstafa → Barkhudarly *(border station)* – (Ijevan, Armenia)

Beyouk Kesik *(border station)*

(Gardabani, Georgia)

BANGLADESH

Darsana – Gundum

(Gede, India)

Darsana *(border station)*

Ishurdi *(junction)* → Abdulpur *(junction)* – Rohanpur *(border station)* – (Singhabad, India)

↳ Abdulpur *(junction)* – Parbatipur – Birol *(border station)* – (Radhikapur, India)

Tongi *(junction)* → Dhaka

Akhaura *(junction)* → Kulaura – Shahbazpur *(border station)* – (Mahisasan, India)

Chittagong *(maritime connection)*

Dohazari

[Gundum *(border station)*

(border station) Myanmar]

CAMBODIA

Poipet – Sihanoukville

(Klong Luk, Thailand)

[Poipet *(border station)*

Sisophon]

Bat Deng *(junction)* → [Kratie *(border station)* – (Loc Ninh province[1], Viet Nam)]

1. Exact location to be decided.

Phnom Penh *(junction)*

Sihanoukville *(maritime connection)*

CHINA

Alashankou – Lianyungang

(Dostyk, Kazakhstan)

Alashankou *(border station and break-of-gauge)*

Urumchi

Turpan *(junction)* → Kashi [*(border station and break-of-gauge)* – (Torugart, Kyrgyzstan)]

Lanzhou

Baoji *(junction)* → Kunming *(junction)* – Xiangyun *(junction)* –Dali *(junction)* – [Kachang (*border station and break-of-gauge)* – (Myitkyina, Myanmar)]

↳ [Xiangyun – Jinghong *(border station and break-of-gauge)* – (Boten, Lao PDR)]

↳ Dali *(junction)* – [Rueli *(border station and break-of-gauge)* – (Muse, Myanmar)]

Kunming *(junction)* – Hekou *(border station)* – (Lao Cai, Viet Nam)

→ Kunming *(junction)* – Nanning *(junction)* – Guangzhou *(junction)*

→ ↳ Nanning *(junc n)* – Hengyang (connects with Beijing-Shenzhen line)

↳ Guangzhou (connects with Beijing-Shenzhen line)

Xian

Zhengzhou *(junction)* → (connects with Beijing-Shenzhen line)

Xizhou *(junction)* → (connects with Tianjin-Shanghai line)

Lianyungang *(maritime connection)*

Erenhot – Dandong

(Zamyn Uud, Mongolia)

Erenhot *(border station and break-of-gauge)*

Beijing *(junction)* → (connects with Beijing-Shenzhen line)

Tianjin *(maritime connection)*

Shenyang *(junction)* → (connects with Manzhouli-Dalian line)

Dandong *(border station)*

(Sinuiju, Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

Manzhouli – Dalian

(Zabaikalsk, Russian Federation)

Manzhouli *(border station and break-of-gauge)*

Harbin *(junction)* → Suifenhe *(border station and break-of-gauge)* – (Grodekovo, Russian Federation)

Changchun *(junction)* → Tumen *(border station)* – (Namyang, Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

Shenyang *(junction)* → (connects with Erenhot-Dandong line)

Dalian *(maritime connection)*

Beijing – Shenzhen

Beijing
Zhengzhou *(junction)*
Wuhan → (connects with Alashankou-Lianyungang line)
Hengyang *(junction)* → Nanning *(junction)* – Pingxiang *(border station and break-of-gauge*)* – (Dong Dang, Viet Nam)
(* Dual gauge track going across into Viet Nam to Gia Lam)
↳ Nanning - Kunming
Guangzhou *(junction)* → Nanning *(junction)* – Kunming
↳ Pingxiang *(border station and break-of-gauge*)* – (Dong Dang, Viet Nam)
(* Dual gauge track going across into Viet Nam to Gia Lam)
Shenzhen

Tianjin – Shanghai

Tianjin *(maritime connection)*
Jinan *(junction)* → Qingdao *(maritime connection)*
Xizhou *(junction)* → (connects with Alashankou-Lianyungang line)
Nanjing
Shanghai *(maritime connection)*

DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Sinuiju – Kaesong

(Dandong, China)
Sinuiju *(border station)*
Pyongyang
Kaesong
Bongdong *(Southernmost station)*
(Dorasan, Republic of Korea)

Tumangang – Kumgangsan

(Khasan, Russian Federation)

Tumangang *(junction, border station and break-of-gauge)* → Namyang *(border station)* – (Tumen, China)

Rajin *(junction)* → Rajin *(maritime connection)*

Chongjin *(junction)* → Namyang *(border station)* – (Tumen, China)

→ Chongjin *(maritime connection)*

Kowon

Wonsan

Haegumgang

Onjongri *(Southernmost station)*

(Jejin, Republic of Korea)

GEORGIA

Gantiadi – Gardabani

(Veseloe, Russian Federation)

Gantiadi *(border station)*

Senaki *(junction)* → Poti *(maritime connection)*

Samtredia *(junction)* → Batumi *(maritime connection)*

Tbilisi *(junction)* → Sadakhlo *(border station)* – (Ayrum, Armenia)

→ [Akhalkalaki *(border station and break-of-gauge)* – (Kars, Turkey)]

Gardabani *(border station)*

(Beyouk Kesik, Azerbaijan)

INDIA

Attari – Jiribam

(Wagah, Pakistan)

Attari *(border station)*

Dhandari Kalan

New Delhi *(junction)* → Mathura *(junction)* – Agra – Nagpur *(junction)* – Vijayawada *(junction)* – Chennai *(maritime connection)* – Jolarpettai *(junction)* – Madurai *(junction)* – Tuticorin *(maritime connection)*

↳ Mathura *(junction)* – Mumbai *(maritime connection)*

↳ Nagpur *(junction)* – Mumbai *(maritime connection)*

↳ Nagpur *(junction)* – Kolkata *(maritime connection)*

↳ Vijayawada *(junction)* – Visakhapatnam *(maritime connection)* – Kolkata *(maritime connection)*

↳ Jolarpettai *(junction)* – Mumbai *(maritime connection)*

↳ Madurai *(junction)* – Rameswaram *(ferry terminal)* – (Talaimannar, Sri Lanka)

Kanpur *(junction)* → Raxaul *(border station)* – (Birgunj, Nepal)

Mughalsarai

Sitarampur *(junction)* → Raxaul *(border station)* – (Birgunj, Nepal)

Kolkata *(junction and maritime connection)* → Haldia *(maritime connection)*

Gede *(border station)*

(Darsana, Shahbazpur, Bangladesh)

Mahisasan *(border station)*

Badarpur

Jiribam *(border station and break-of-gauge)*

[(Tamu, Myanmar)]

INDONESIA

Merak – Banyuwangi

Merak *(ferry terminal)*

Jakarta *(junction and maritime connection)* → Sukabumi – Padalarang – Cikampek *(junction)*

Cikampek *(junction)* → Cirebon *(junction)* – Semarangtawang *(junction)* – Surabayapasarturi *(maritime connection)*

↳ Prupuk *(junction)* – Purwokerto – Kroya *(junction)*

Bandung

Gedebage

Kroya *(junction)* → Purwokerto – Prupuk *(junction)* – Cirebon *(junction)*

Yogyakarta *(junction)* → [Magelang]

Solobalapan *(junction)* → Gundih – Semarangtawang *(junction)*

Kertosono *(junction)* → Wonokromo – Surabayakota

Malang

Bangil

Banyuwangi *(ferry terminal)*

[Banda Aceh] – Pangkalansusu – Rantauprapat

[Banda Aceh]

Pangkalansusu

Medan *(junction)* → Belawan *(maritime connection)*

Tebingtinggi *(junction)* → Siantar

Kisaran *(junction)* → Tanjungbalai

Rantauprapat → [Payakumbuh]

Teluk Bayur – Muaro

Teluk Bayur *(maritime connection)*

Bukitputus *(junction)* → Indarung

Padang

Lubuk Alung *(junction)* → Naras

Padang Panjang *(junction)* → Bukittingi – Payakumbuh

Muarakalaban *(junction)* → Sawahlunto

Muaro → [Lubuklinggau]

Lubuklinggau – Panjang

Lubuklinggau

Muaraenim *(junction)* → Tanjung Enim

Prabumulih *(junction)* → Kertapati

Tanjungkarang *(junction)* → Tarahan

Panjang *(ferry terminal)*

IRAN (ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF)

Razi – Sarakhs

(Kapikoy, Turkey)

Razi *(border station)*

Sufian *(junction)* → Jolfa *(border station and break-of-gauge)* – (Djulfa, Azerbaijan)

Tabriz

Miyaneh *(junction)*

Qazvin *(junction)* → [Rasht – Bandar-e-Anzali *(ferry terminal)* – Astara *(border station and break-of-gauge)*] – (Astara, Azerbaijan)

(Ferry link to Caspian sea ports in *Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation* and *Turkmenistan*)

Tehran *(junction)* → Qom *(junction)* – Badrud *(junction)* – Meybod – Bafq *(junction)* – Kerman – [Bam – Fahraj] Zahedan *(break-of-gauge)* – Mirjaveh *(border station)* – (Koh-i-Taftan, Pakistan)

↳ Qom *(junction)* – Arak *(junction)* – Ahvaz *(junction)* – Khorramshahr *(maritime connection)*

↳ [Arak *(junction)* – Kermanshah – Khosravi *(border station)* – (Khaneghein, Irak)]

↳ Ahvaz – Bandar-Emam *(maritime connection)*

↳ Badrud *(junction)* – Esfahan

↳ Bafq (connects with Sarakhs – Bandar Abbas line)

Garmsar *(junction)* → Bandar-e-Amirabad *(ferry terminal)* (ferry link to Caspian sea ports in *Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation* and *Turkmenistan*)

Shahrood

Kashmar *(junction)* → (connects with Sarakhs – Bandar Abbas line)

Fariman *(junction)* → Mashhad

Sarakhs *(border station and break-of-gauge)*

(Sarakhs, Turkmenistan)

Sarakhs – Bandar Abbas

(Sarakhs, Turkmenistan)

Sarakhs *(border station and break-of-gauge)*

Fariman *(junction)* → Mashhad

Kashmar *(junction)* → (connects with Razi-Sarakhs line)

Torbat Heidarieh → [Sangan *(border station)* – Herat *(border station)* – (Afghanistan)]

Tabas

Chadormalu *(junction)* → Ardakan

Bafq *(junction)* → (connects with Qom-Mirjaveh line)

Bandar Abbas *(maritime connection)*

KAZAKHSTAN

Petropavlosk – Dostyk

(Utyak, Russian Federation)

Petropavlosk *(border station)*

Kokshetav

Astana *(junction)* → Ecil – Tobol *(junction and border station)* – (Kartaly, Russian Federation)

↳ Tobol *(junction)* – Aiteke-bi – Nikeltau – Kandagach *(junction)*

→ (connects with Semiglavii March-Aktogai line)

Karaghandy

Mointy *(junction)* → Chu *(junction)*

Aktogai *(junction)* → Semipalatinsk – Aul *(border station)* – (Lokot, Russian Federation)

→ (connects with Semiglavii Mar-Aktogai line)

Dostyk *(border station and break-of-gauge)*

(Alashankou, China)

Semiglavii Mar – Aktogai

(Ozinki, Russian Federation)

Semiglavii Mar

Uralsk *(border station)*

Iletsk I *(border station)*, Russian Federation → (Orenburg, Russian Federation)

Aktobe

Kandagach *(junction)* → Nikeltau *(border station)* – (Orsk, Russian Federation)

↳ Nikeltau *(border station)* – Aiteke-bi – Tobol *(junction)* – Astana *(junction)*

→ (connects with Petropavlosk-Dostyk line)

→ Makat *(junction)* – Ganyushkino – (Aksaraiskaya, Russian Federation)

↳ Makat *(junction)* – Beyneu *(junction)* – Oazis – (Karakalpakia, Uzbekistan)

↳ Beyneu *(junction)* – Aktau port *(ferry terminal)* – (Ferry link to Caspian sea ports in *Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Russian Federation and Turkmenistan*)

Tyuratam

Kzyl-Orda

Arys *(junction)* → Sary-Agash *(border station)* – (Keles, Uzbekistan)

Chimkent

Djambul

Lugovaya *(junction and border station)* → (Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan)

Chu *(junction)* → Mointy *(junction)*

Almaty - I

Ushtobe

Aktogai *(junction)* → (connects with Petropavlosk-Dostyk line)

KYRGYZSTAN

Bishkek – Kochkor

(Lugovaya, Kazakhstan)
↓
Alamedin
Balykchi
[Kochkor]

[Kochkor – Torugart]

[Kochkor
↓
Kara-Keche
Arpa *(junction)* → [Missing link] – Osh *(station Karasu)* – Jalal-Abad *(border station)* – (Andizhan, Uzbekistan)
Torugart *(border station and break-of-gauge)*
(Kashi, China)]

Border with Uzbekistan – Osh

(Andizhan, Uzbekistan)
↓
Osh *(station Karasu) (border station)*

LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

[Thanaleng – Mu Gia]

[(Nongkhai, Thailand)
↓
Thanaleng *(border station)*
Vientianne *(junction)* → [Boten *(border station)* – (Jinghong, China)]
Thakhek *(junction and border station)* → [Nakhon Phanom, Thailand]
Mu Gia *(border station)*
(Mu Gia, Viet Nam)]

[Vangtao – Densavanh]

[(Chong Mek, Thailand)
Vangtao *(border station)*
Pakse
Savannakhet *(junction and border station)* → [*(Mukdahan, Thailand)*]
Densavanh *(border station)*
(Lao Bao, Viet Nam)]

MALAYSIA

Padang Besar – Johor Bahru

(Padang Besar, Thailand)
Padang Besar *(border station)*
Bukit Mertajam *(junction)* → Butterworth *(maritime connection)*
Ipoh
Kuala Lumpur *(junction)* → Port Klang *(maritime connection)*
→ Setia Jaya
Kajang
Gemas *(junction)* → Wakaf Bahru *(junction)* – Rantau Panjang *(border station)* – (Sungai Kolok, Thailand)
↳ Wakaf Bahru – Tumpat
Segamat
Kempas Bahru *(junction)* → Pasir Gudang *(maritime connection)*
→ Tanjung Pelepas *(maritime connection)*
Johor Bahru *(border station)*
(Singapore)

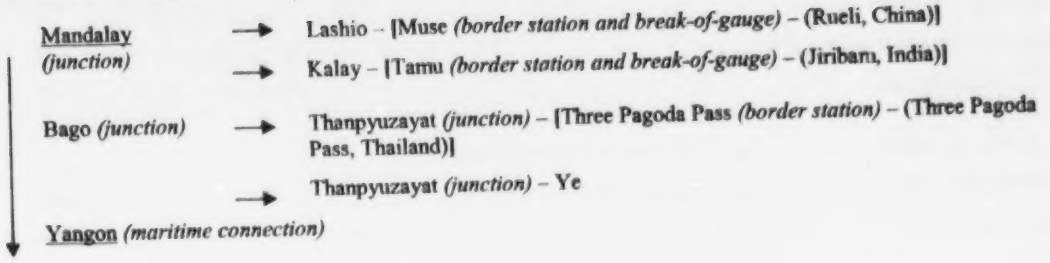
MONGOLIA

Sukhbaatar – Zamyn Uud

(Naushki, Russian Federation)
Sukhbaatar *(border station)*
Ulaanbaatar
Zamyn Uud *(border station and break-of-gauge)*
(Erenhot, China)

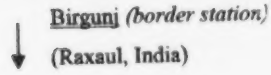
MYANMAR

Mandalay – Yangon

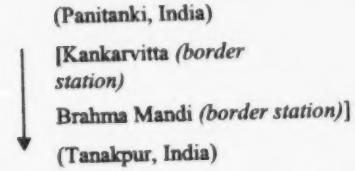

Mandalay
(junction)
Lashio – [Muse (border station and break-of-gauge) – (Rueli, China)]
Kalay – [Tamu (border station and break-of-gauge) – (Jiribam, India)]
Bago (junction)
Thanpyuzayat (junction) – [Three Pagoda Pass (border station) – (Three Pagoda Pass, Thailand)]
Thanpyuzayat (junction) – Ye
Yangon (maritime connection)

NEPAL

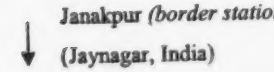
Birgunj – Border with India



[Kakarvitta – Brahma Mandi]



Janakpur – Border with India



PAKISTAN

Koh-i-Taftan – Wagah

(Mirjaveh, Islamic Republic of Iran)

Koh-i-Taftan *(border station)*

Dalbandin *(junction)* → [Gwadar *(maritime connection)*]

Spezand *(junction)* → Quetta – Bostan – Chaman *(border station)* – (Spinbuldak, Afghanistan)

Rohri *(junction)* → Hyderabad *(junction)* – Karachi *(maritime connection)* – Qasim *(maritime connection)*

↳ Hyderabad *(junction)* – Mirpurkhas – Khokropar *(border station)*

Lodhran *(junction)* → Sher Shah *(junction)* – Khanewal – Faisalabad – Shahdara *(junction)* (connects with Lahore-Peshawar line)

→ Sher Shah – Kundian – Attock *(junction)* – Peshawar *(border station)* – (Afghanistan)

Khanewal *(junction)* → Shahdara (connects with Lahore-Peshawar line)

Multan

Lahore *(junction)*

Wagah *(border station)*

(Attari, India)

Peshawar – Lahore

(Afghanistan)

Peshawar *(border station)*

Attock *(junction)* → Sher Shah – Lodhran (connects with Koh-i-Taftan – Wagah line)

Islamabad

Rawalpindi

Shahdara *(junction)* → Khanewal – Lodhran (connects with Koh-i-Tafan – Wagah line)

Lahore

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Dorasan – Busan

(Bongdong, Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

Dorasan *(Northernmost station)*

Seoul

Suwon

Daejeon *(junction)* → Iksan *(junction)* - Mokpo *(maritime connection)*

↳ Gwangyang *(maritime connection)*

Daegu

Busan *(maritime connection)*

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Buslovskaya – Moscow

(Vainikkala, Finland)

Buslovskaya *(border station)*

Saint Petersburg *(junction)* → MGA – Volhovstroi – Koshta – Vologda – Kotelnich *(junction)* – Ekaterinburg *(junction)*

↳ Kotelnich *(junction)* (connects with Krasnoe – Nakhodka line)

Moscow *(junction)* → (connects with Krasnoe – Nakhodka line)

Suzemka – Moscow

(Zernovo, Ukraine)

Suzemka *(border station)*

Bryansk

Moscow *(junction)* → (connects with Krasnoe – Nakhodka line)

Krasnoe – Nakhodka

(Osinovka, Belarus)

Krasnoe *(border station)*

Smolensk

Moscow

Nizhniy Novgorod

Kotelnich *(junction)* → Saint Petersburg

Ekaterinburg *(junction)* → Kurgan – Utyak *(border station)* – (Petropavlosk, Kazakhstan)

→ Chelyabinsk – Kartaly *(junction and border station)* – (Tobol, Kazakhstan)

↳ Kartaly *(junction and border station)* – Orsk *(junction and border station)* – (Nikeltau, Kazakhstan)

↳ Orsk *(junction and border station)* – Orenburg – (Iletsk, Russian Federation) – (Aktyubinsk, Kazakhstan)

Tatarskaya *(junction)* → Lokot *(junction and border station)* – (Aul, Kazakhstan)

Novosibirsk *(junction)* → Lokot *(junction and border station)* – (Aul, Kazakhstan)

Krasnoyarsk

Irkutsk

Ulan Ude

Zaudinski *(junction)* → Naushki *(border station)* – (Sukhbaatar, Mongolia)

Karimskaya *(junction)* → Zabaykalsk *(border station and break-of-gauge)* – (Manzhouli, China)

Ussurijsk *(junction)* → Grodekovo *(border station and break-of-gauge)* – (Suifenhe, China)

Baranovski *(junction)* → Khasan *(border station and break-of-gauge)* – (Tumangang, Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

Uglovaya *(junction)* → Vladivostok *(maritime connection)*

Nakhodka *(junction, maritime connection)* → Vostochny *(maritime connection)*

Moscow – Samur

Moscow

Ryazan

Kochetovka *(junction)* → Rtisthevo – Saratov – Ozinki *(border station)* – (Semiglavii Mir, Kazakhstan)

Gryazi *(junction)* → Volgograd

Liski

Likhaya *(junction)* → Rostov – Krasnodar *(junction)* – Veseloe *(border station)* – (Gantiadi, Georgia)

↳ Krasnodar *(junction)* – Krimskaya *(junction)* – Novo-rossiisk *(maritime connection)*

↳ Krimskaya *(junction)* – Kavkaz *(maritime connection and ferry terminal)*

Volgograd *(junction)* → Gryazi

Aksarayskaya *(junction and border station)* → (Ganyushkino, Kazakhstan)

Astrakhan → Port Olya *(ferry terminal)* – (ferry links to Caspian sea ports in *Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan* and *Turkmenistan*)

Makhachkala *(border station and ferry terminal)* (Ferry links to Caspian sea ports in *Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan* and *Turkmenistan*)

Samur *(border station)*

(Yalama, Azerbaijan)

SINGAPORE

Woodlands –

(Johor Bahru, Malaysia)

Woodlands *(border station)*

SRI LANKA

Kataragama – Katunayake

[Kataragama

Hambantota

Matara]

Colombo *(maritime connection)*

Sri Jayewardenepura Kotte

Katunayake

Colombo – Talaimannar

Colombo *(maritime connection)*

Kurunegala *(junction)* → [Dambulla]

Maho *(junction)* → Trincomalee *(maritime connection)*

Talaimannar *(ferry terminal)* → (Rameswaram, India)

TAJIKISTAN

Nau – Kanibadam

(Bekabad, Uzbekistan)
Nau *(border station)*
Khudjand
Kanibadam *(junction and border station)* → Isfara
(Suvanabad, Uzbekistan)

Pakhtaabad – Yangi Bazar

(Sariasya, Uzbekistan)
Pakhtaabad *(border station)*
Regar
Dushanbe II
Dushanbe I
Yangi Bazar

Khoshad – Kulyab

(Amuzang, Uzbekistan)
Khoshad *(border station)*
Kurgan Tube *(junction)* → Yavan
Kulyab

THAILAND

Nongkhai – Padang Besar

(Thanaleng, Lao People's Democratic Republic)
Nongkhai *(border station)*
Bua Yai *(junction)* → [Nakhon Phanom *(border station)* – (Thakhek, Lao People's Democratic Republic)]
→ [Mukdahan *(border station)* – (Savannakhet, Lao People's Democratic Republic)]
Kaeng Khoi *(junction)* → Nakhonratchasima – Ubonratchathani – [Chong Mek *(border station)* – (Pakse, Lao People's Democratic Republic)]

Banphachi *(junction)* → Nakhonsawan *(junction)* – Denchai *(junction)* – Chiangmai

↳ [Nakhonsawan – Mae Sod *(border station)* – (Myawadi, Myanmar)]

↳ [Denchai – Chiangrai – Mae Sai *(border station)* – (Tachilek, Myanmar)]

Bangkok – Bang Sue station *(junction)* → Ladkrabang – Chachoengsao *(junction)* – Si Racha *(junction)* – Kao Chi Chan *(junction)* – Sattahip *(maritime connection)*

→ Chachoengsao *(junction)* – Aranyaprathet – Khlong Luk *(border station)* – [(Poipet, Cambodia)]

→ Si Racha – Laemchabang *(maritime connection)*

→ Kao Chi Chan – Map Ta Put *(maritime connection)*

Nong Pla Duk *(junction)* → Namtok – [Three Pagoda Pass *(border station)* – (Thanpyuzayat, Myanmar)]

Hat Yai *(junction)* → Sungai Kolok *(border station)* – (Rantau Panjang, Malaysia)

Padang Besar *(border station)*

(Padang Besar, Malaysia)

TURKEY

Kapikule – Kapikoy

(Bulgaria, Europe)

Kapikule *(border station)*

Istanbul

Eskisehir *(junction)* → Alayunt – Balikesir – Izmir *(border station)*

Ankara

Kalin *(junction)* → Samsun *(maritime connection)*

Sivas

Cetinkaya *(junction)* → Kars *(junction)* – Dogukapi *(border station and break-of-gauge)* – (Akhuryan, Armenia)

→ [Kars *(junction, border station and break-of-gauge)* – (Akhalkalaki, Georgia)]

Malatya *(junction)* → Topprakale *(junction)* – Adana – Mersin *(maritime connection)*

Toprakkale – Iskenderun *(maritime connection)*

Tatvan – Van (ferry crossing) →

Kapikoy *(border station)*

(Razi, Islamic Republic of Iran)

TURKMENISTAN

Turkmenbashi – Turkmenabad

(Baku, Azerbaijan)

Turkmenbashi *(ferry terminal)* → (Ferry link to Caspian sea ports in *Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan* and *Russian Federation*)

Ashgabat

Tenzhen

Mari *(junction)* → Parakhat – Sarakhs *(border station and break-of-gauge)* – (Sarakhs, Islamic Republic of Iran)

Turkmenabad *(junction and (border station)* → Gazodjak *(border station)* – *(Pitnyak – K.P.449, Uzbekistan)* – Dashowuz – Takhyatash *(border station)* – (Uzbekistan)

(Khodchadavlet, Uzbekistan)

UZBEKISTAN

Keles – Khodchadavlet

(Sari-Agash, Kazakhstan)

Keles *(border station)*

Tukumachi *(junction)* → Ozodlik – [Angren – Khalkobad] – Pap *(junction)* – Kokand

Sirdarinskaya

Khavast *(junction)* → Bekabad *(border station)* – *(Nau – Kanibadam, Tajikistan)* – Suvanabad *(border station)* – Kokand *(junction)* – Margilan – Andizhan *(border station)* – (Osh, Kyrgyzstan)

↳ Kokand *(junction)* – Pap *(junction)* – Namangan

Samarkand

Ulugbek

Navoi *(junction)* → Tinchlik – Uchkuduk – Nukus – Kungrad – Karakalpakia *(border station)* – (Oazis, Kazakhstan)

Bukhara *(junction)* → Karshi *(junction)* – Tashguzar *(junction)* – [Dekhanabad – Darband] – Boysun – Kumkurgran *(junction)* – Sariasiya *(border station)* – (Pakhtabad, Tajikistan)

↳ Karshi *(junction)* – RZD 154 *(border station)* – *(Talimarjan – Kerkichi (junction) – Kelif, Turkmenistan)* - Termez *(junction)* – Galaba *(border station)* – (Khairaton, Afghanistan)

↳ Termez *(junction)* – Kumkurgran *(junction)* – Sariasiya *(border station)* – (Pakhtabad, Tajikistan)

Khodchadavlet *(border station)*

(Turkmenabad, Turkmenistan)

VIET NAM

Lao Cai – Ho Chi Minh City

(Hekou, China)

Lao Cai *(border station)*

Dong Anh *(junction)* → Luu Xa – Quan Trieu

Yên Viên *(junction)* → (connects with Hanoi – Dong Dang line)

Gialam *(junction)* → Haiphong *(maritime connection)*

Hanoi

Tan Ap *(junction)* → [Mu Gia *(border station)* – (Lao People's Democratic Republic)]

[Vung Ang *(maritime connection)*]

Danang →

Ho Chi Minh City *(junction)* → [Vung Tau *(maritime connection)*]

→ [Loc Ninh province[1] *(border station)* – (Kratie, Cambodia)]

1. Exact location to be decided.

Hanoi – Dong Dang

Hanoi

Gialam *(junction)*

Yên Viên *(junction)* → (connects with Lao Cai-Ho Chi Minh City line)

Lim *(junction)* → Pha Lai *(junction)* – Halong *(maritime connection)*

Kep *(junction)* → Halong – Cai Lan *(maritime connection)*

→ Luu Xa – Quan Trieu

Dong Dang *(border station)*

(Pingxiang, China)

Annex II

GUIDING PRINCIPLES RELATING TO TECHNICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TRANS-ASIAN RAILWAY NETWORK

1. General

The development of the Trans-Asian Railway network, as defined in Annex I of the Agreement, shall be guided by the following principles relating to technical characteristics. Parties shall make every possible effort to conform to these principles both in constructing new rail sections and upgrading and modernizing existing ones.

2. Line capacity

Railway lines of international importance must provide adequate capacity so as to allow efficient, reliable and economical movement of rail services for goods and passengers.

3. Vehicle loading gauge

Given that the Trans-Asian Railway network will be an important component in the definition of an integrated international intermodal transport network for countries of the ESCAP region, the existing lines of the network should be, wherever necessary, upgraded and future lines should be developed so as to provide unhindered movements of ISO containers of at least 20-foot dimension in length and above.

4. Interoperability

Technical requirements should ensure seamless transport of international goods and containers along railway lines of international importance. Accordingly, railway lines and related infrastructure and equipment

should meet international requirements, including those for the transport and transfer of heavy trains carrying goods such as, *inter alia*, petroleum products, coal, mineral ores, cement and grain.

Parties should take into consideration technical requirements of neighbouring countries, as well as other countries through which railway lines of international importance pass, and endeavour to upgrade their lines so as to remove technical restrictions and ensure interoperability between railways.

Where gauge continuity permits, or is likely to result from constructing missing sections across borders, specific issues arise as regards the compatibility of rolling stock used in international transport, including braking systems and couplings. In this respect, the efficiency of railway operations across borders requires the use of air-braked rolling stock and compatible coupling systems.

For reference, the gauges of the Trans-Asian Railway network are as follows:

Railway gauge of TAR member countries (mm)				
1,000	1,067	1,435	1,520	1,676
1. Bangladesh[1]	Indonesia	1. China[2]	1. Armenia	1. Bangladesh[1]
2. Cambodia		2. Democratic People's Republic of Korea	2. Azerbaijan	2. India
3. Lao People's Democratic Republic		3. Republic of Korea	3. Georgia	3. Nepal
4. Malaysia		4. Islamic Republic of Iran	4. Kazakhstan	4. Pakistan
5. Myanmar		5. Turkey	5. Kyrgyzstan	5. Sri Lanka
6. Singapore[3]			6. Mongolia	
7. Thailand			7. Russian Federation	
8. Viet Nam[4]			8. Tajikistan	
			9. Turkmenistan	
			10. Uzbekistan	

Potential members of TAR: Japan (1,067 mm gauge) and the Philippines (1,067 mm gauge).

[1] Part of railway network of the country.

[2] Features also a line (from/to Viet Nam) of 1,000 mm gauge.

[3] Service provided by railways of Malaysia.

[4] Features also lines of 1,435 mm gauge and dual 1,000/1,435 mm gauge.

5. Standards for container terminals

International intermodal traffic requires efficient container terminals. The international container terminals along the lines of the Trans-Asian Railway network must:

- be located as close as possible to the main trunk line so that no time is lost entering and exiting the terminal;
- be set aside from other yards so that their operations are not hampered by other shunting movements;
- offer easy access to road vehicles so as to guarantee reliability of the road-rail interface;
- have track of sufficient length at loading/unloading area to reduce the need for shunting;
- be equipped with equipment comprising of gantry cranes, straddle-carriers, top-lifters and/or reach-stackers able to handle ISO containers of at least 20-foot dimension in length;
- make provisions for possible expansion;
- offer Customs facilities for the clearance of goods.

62/5. Building the information society in Asia and the Pacific[5]

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Inspired by the global commitment to build a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society, as evidenced by the adoption of the Geneva Declaration of Principles and the Geneva Plan of Action at the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, held in Geneva in December 2003, as well as the adoption of the Tunis Commitment and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society at the second phase of the World Summit, held in Tunis in November 2005,

Emphasizing the importance of universal access to knowledge and information for promoting development,

Recalling that the Tunis Agenda recognizes the intrinsic relationship between disaster reduction, sustainable development and the eradication of poverty and highlights the important role of information and communication technology tools in addressing these issues,

Recalling also that the Tunis Agenda indicates that World Summit implementation and follow-up should be an integral part of the United Nations integrated follow-up to major United Nations conferences, should contribute to the achievement of internationally agreed development goals and objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals, and should not require the creation of any new operational bodies,

Recalling further that the Tunis Agenda indicates that regional commissions, based on the request of member States and within approved budgetary resources, may organize regional World Summit follow-up activities and assist member States with technical and relevant information for the development of regional strategies and the implementation of the outcomes of regional conferences,

Recalling that the Tunis Agenda indicates that international and regional organizations should assess and report regularly on the universal accessibility of nations to information and communication technologies, with the aim of creating equitable opportunities for the growth of the information and communication technology sectors of developing countries,

Recalling also that the United Nations Millennium Declaration, as adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000, resolved to ensure that the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communication technologies, were available to all,

Reaffirming the regional commitment to strengthen regional cooperation in information and communication technologies for development, as contained in Commission resolution 57/4 of 25 April 2001,

Recalling the regional commitment, shared vision and common strategies for the information society stipulated in the Tokyo Declaration – the Asia-Pacific Perspective on the World Summit, adopted by the Asia-Pacific Regional Conference held in January 2003,

Reaffirming the regional commitment to take action to achieve the objectives of the World Summit as well as to promote regional cooperation and effective integration of satellite-based information and communication technology applications with other information technologies for sustainable development, as contained in the Shanghai Declaration adopted by the Commission at its sixtieth session,

Noting the outcomes of the High-level Asia-Pacific Conference for the World Summit on the Information Society, held in Tehran in May/June 2005, which adopted the Tehran Declaration and the Regional Action Plan towards the Information Society for Asia and the Pacific,

Also noting the outcomes of four subregional conferences, held respectively in Kyrgyzstan in November 2004, in Fiji in December 2004, in Indonesia in February 2005 and in Nepal in March 2005, and their contributions to the global discussions on Internet governance, financing mechanisms for information and communication technology for development and the role of information and communication technologies in knowledge-based disaster management,

Recalling that the Commission at its sixtieth session expressed appreciation of the fact that ESCAP had initiated preparations for the Third Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, and agreed to hold it in 2007,

1. *Invites* all members and, as appropriate, associate members in the region to participate actively in the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society outcomes, including, as appropriate, through the Regional Action Plan, especially by promoting regional cooperation and the creation of an enabling environment for the application of information and communication technology and the development of the information society in the region;

2. *Invites* international and regional organizations, including the members of the Regional Inter-agency Working Group on ICT, to cooperate with ESCAP in regional implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society outcomes, including, as appropriate, through the Regional Action Plan;

[5] See paragraphs 220 to 225 above.

3. *Also invites* regional and multilateral financial institutions, donor countries and agencies, and non-governmental organizations to contribute technical and financial resources for the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society outcomes, including, as appropriate, through the Regional Action Plan;

4. *Welcomes* the generous offer of the Government of Malaysia to host the Third Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific in 2007 and invites all members and, as appropriate, associate members to participate actively in the Conference;

5. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, within existing regular budget resources, or through voluntary contributions, as available:

(a) To undertake actions, using a multi-stakeholder approach, including with the participation of the private sector and civil society, to promote the exchange of information and best practices at the regional level and to facilitate policy debate on the use of information and communication technology for development, with a focus on attaining the internationally agreed development goals and objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals;

(b) To organize expert group meetings, in coordination with the International Telecommunication Union and other relevant organizations, as appropriate, to promote capacity-building in developing countries for monitoring the information society;

(c) To assist member States with technical and relevant information for the development of regional strategies and the implementation of the outcomes of regional conferences, to develop policies and plans focusing on communication technology applications;

(d) To continue, within its existing mandate, effective coordination and evaluation of activities at the regional level of all United Nations and international organizations concerned, including through the Regional Inter-agency Working Group on ICT;

(e) To build capacity consistent with the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society and encourage the active and collective efforts of all stakeholders and, especially, partnership among Governments, the private sector and civil society in transforming the digital divide into digital opportunities and bringing the benefits of information and communication technology to all;

(f) To continue the preparations for the Third Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific as an important mechanism for regional follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society;

(g) To report to the Commission at its sixty-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

5th meeting
12 April 2006

62/6. Managing globalization through strengthened regional cooperation in trade and investment[6]

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling the 2005 World Summit Outcome and the United Nations Millennium Declaration as well as other relevant declarations adopted at international summits and conferences emphasizing the role of trade and investment as engines for economic growth and development,

Recalling also its resolution 57/5 of 25 April 2001 on integration of Asian and Pacific developing countries and economies in transition into the international trading system and resolution 60/1 of 28 April 2004 on the Shanghai Declaration,

Emphasizing the need to forge partnerships for development, in support of internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration,

Emphasizing also the role of the regional commissions of the United Nations in capacity-building work in trade and investment in close cooperation with other relevant global and regional bodies,

Recognizing that improved market access and supply-side capacity-building enhance financial, trade and investment flows,

Reaffirming the importance of a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable trading system,

Emphasizing the importance of facilitating the accession of members and, as appropriate, associate members to the World Trade Organization, consistent with its criteria, and recognizing the importance of universal integration in the rules-based global trading system,

Emphasizing also the contribution to development of regional trade agreements and their potential role as building blocks of the multilateral trading system and as catalysts for regional and global trade liberalization,

Expressing its appreciation of the revitalization of the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement[7] and the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration at the first session of the

[6] See paragraphs 173 to 185 above.

[7] Known from 1975 to 2005 as the "Bangkok Agreement".

Ministerial Council of the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement, held in Beijing on 2 November 2005, in which Participating States committed themselves to a strengthening of the Agreement,

Recognizing the uniqueness of the Agreement as the region's oldest such agreement, the largest regional trade agreement in terms of the population it covers and the agreement that spans the widest spectrum of subregions and levels of development, and noting that these unique characteristics could lay the foundation for strengthened economic integration in a manner consistent with the principles and rules of the multilateral trading system,

Recognizing also that trade facilitation is an essential condition for strengthening economic integration and international competitiveness,

Acknowledging the vital role of the business sector in development and poverty reduction, in particular through the generation of new investments, employment and financing for development,

Underlining the importance of policies conducive to the development of competitive small and medium-sized enterprises, in particular rural-based small and medium-sized enterprises, in recognition of the fact that most of the region's poor live in rural areas,

Recognizing that a conducive business climate facilitates the mobilization of investment and other forms of stable and predictable financing from domestic and foreign resources,

Emphasizing that in an economy where knowledge and innovation increasingly are determinants of increased productivity and competitiveness for small and medium-sized enterprises, the development of science-based knowledge and technology, particularly agricultural technology, including through the transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms, is also a vital component of a conducive business climate,

1. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, within existing regular budget resources, or through voluntary contributions, as available:

(a) To continue efforts, in collaboration with regional and global partners, to undertake policy-oriented analytical work and provide technical assistance to ESCAP members and, as appropriate, associate members in order to increase their human and institutional capacity:

(i) To negotiate, conclude and implement multilateral and regional trade agreements, with a specific focus on strengthening the World Trade Organization/ESCAP Programme of Technical Assistance for Asia and the Pacific;

(ii) To formulate and implement trade facilitation and e-commerce practices for enhancing international competitiveness;

(iii) To create a domestic policy environment conducive to the development of small and medium-sized enterprises and the mobilization of stable financial and investment flows;

(iv) To promote a competitive knowledge-based economy through the development of science-based knowledge and the transfer of technology;

(b) To continue to evaluate and analyse regional and bilateral trade agreements involving ESCAP members and, as appropriate, associate members;

(c) To take measures upon entry into force of the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement to strengthen the Agreement as an effective mechanism to promote regional cooperation in trade and related issues in conformity with the principles and rules of the multilateral trading system;

(d) To continue to organize policy dialogues in the context of managing globalization, not only among policymakers but also between government, private sector and civil society representatives, including through the Asia-Pacific Business Forum;

(e) In undertaking trade capacity-building assistance, to accord priority to the special needs of least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, countries with economies in transition and small island developing States;

(f) To report to the Commission, at its sixty-fourth session, on the implementation of the resolution.

5th meeting
12 April 2006

62/7. Strengthening regional cooperation and coordination of early warning system arrangements for tsunamis through the Multi-Donor Voluntary Trust Fund on Tsunami Early Warning Arrangements in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia[8]

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling the unprecedented tsunami disaster that struck the Indian Ocean and South-East Asian regions on 26 December 2004 and caused tremendous loss of life and livelihood, as well as socio-economic and environmental damage,

Recognizing the role of natural disaster management in economic and social development and poverty alleviation,

[8] See paragraphs 218 and 219 above.

Recalling General Assembly resolution 59/279 of 19 January 2005, entitled "Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster",

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 60/15 of 14 November 2005 welcoming the establishment of the Multi-Donor Voluntary Trust Fund on Tsunami Early Warning Arrangements in the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia, hereafter referred to as the "Voluntary Trust Fund",

Noting the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session on strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction, recovery and prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster (A/60/86-E/2005/77),

Recognizing the role of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization as the United Nations agency responsible for coordinating and ensuring the inter-operability of tsunami warning systems established across the globe,

Taking note of the establishment of the Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (IOTWS) by the coordination under the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for IOTWS,

Recalling the importance of regional cooperation in tsunami disaster preparedness, the need for partnerships in minimizing vulnerability to tsunami disasters, and the requests for technical assistance, including South-South cooperation, for the development of a regional early warning system for tsunamis,

Noting the Declaration on Action to Strengthen Emergency Relief, Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Prevention in the Aftermath of the Earthquake and Tsunami Disaster of 26 December 2004, adopted at the special meeting of leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, held in Jakarta on 6 January 2005,

Recalling the Hyogo Declaration and the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015, as well as the common statement of the special session on the Indian Ocean disaster, adopted by the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, held in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan from 18 to 22 January 2005,

Noting the Phuket Ministerial Declaration on Regional Cooperation on Tsunami Early Warning Arrangements of the Phuket Ministerial Meeting of 29 January 2005, which, inter alia, emphasized the urgent need for concerted and coordinated regional efforts to develop systems for early warning of tsunamis and also invited interested parties to make contributions to the Voluntary Trust Fund,

Welcoming the establishment of the Voluntary Trust Fund, administered by ESCAP, through an initial contribution of 10 million United States dollars from the Government of Thailand and a subsequent contribution of 2.5 million United States dollars from the Government of Sweden,

Recalling that the Voluntary Trust Fund aims to contribute to narrowing the capacity gaps in the region and ensuring the development of an integrated regional tsunami early warning system based on adequate resources and comprising a network of collaborative centres,

Noting the efforts of ESCAP in the establishment and administration of the Voluntary Trust Fund, including its convening of the first and second regular meetings of the Advisory Council, held in Bangkok on 19 January and 28 March 2006 respectively,

1. *Emphasizes* the importance of international cooperation, including South-South cooperation, as regards planning, implementation, information collection and knowledge sharing, in regional tsunami early warning systems;

2. *Recognizes* the important role of the Voluntary Trust Fund as a means of contributing to the role of the International Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization through resource mobilization for building and enhancing tsunami early warning capacities at various levels, as well as through strengthening regional and subregional cooperation and coordination essential for effective early warning system arrangements for tsunamis;

3. *Invites* Governments, donor countries, relevant international organizations, international and regional financial institutions, as well as the private sector and civil society, to consider contributing to the Voluntary Trust Fund through financial contributions and technical cooperation;

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to ensure that the Voluntary Trust Fund is administered efficiently, effectively and transparently, in accordance with the terms and conditions and objectives of the Fund;

5. *Invites* members and, as appropriate, associate members to accord priority to the mitigation of all natural disasters.

5th meeting
12 April 2006

62/8. Implementation of the International Plan of Action for the United Nations Literacy Decade[9]

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in which the heads of State and Government resolved to ensure that, by 2015, children

[9] See paragraphs 226 to 233 above.

everywhere, boys and girls alike, would be able to complete a full course of primary schooling and that girls and boys would have equal access to all levels of education,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 56/116 of 19 December 2001, by which it proclaimed the ten-year period beginning from 1 January 2003 the United Nations Literacy Decade: Education for All,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 57/166 of 18 December 2002, in which it welcomed the International Plan of Action for the United Nations Literacy Decade,

Recalling further General Assembly resolution 60/1 of 16 September 2005, in which the Assembly emphasized the critical role of both formal and informal education in the achievement of poverty eradication and other development goals as envisaged in the Millennium Declaration,

Noting the leading role of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in the promotion of literacy and education around the world,

Reaffirming that creating literate environments and societies is essential for achieving the goals of eradicating poverty, reducing child mortality, curbing population growth, achieving gender equality and ensuring sustainable development, peace and democracy,

Noting with concern that over sixty per cent of the world's illiterates are in Asia and the Pacific,

Noting that the mid-term review of the United Nations Literacy Decade is to take place in 2007,

Believing that achieving the goal of universal primary education requires a renewed commitment to promote literacy for all,

Welcoming the efforts made by Member States to implement the International Plan of Action for the United Nations Literacy Decade,

1. *Notes with satisfaction* that a number of ESCAP members have already achieved the goal of universal primary education and that many others are on track to do so;

2. *Encourages* those members that have not yet achieved the goal of universal primary education to devise necessary strategies for reaching the poorest and most marginalized groups and to seek, where appropriate, alternative formal and non-formal approaches to learning, with a view to achieving the goals of the United Nations Literacy Decade;

3. *Invites* ESCAP members and, as appropriate, associate members, as well as relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to intensify their efforts to implement the International Plan of Action as a central focus of Education for All, taking into account internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration;

4. *Also invites* the international community and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to continue to lend their financial and material support to the efforts of the ESCAP members in the achievement of the goals of the Decade;

5. *Encourages* ESCAP members to strengthen their national and professional educational institutions with a view to expanding their capacity, developing valid and reliable literacy data and promoting the provision of good quality education;

6. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to assess, within existing regular budget resources or through voluntary contributions as available and within the monitoring of the progress attained in the regional implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, the implementation of the International Plan of Action for the United Nations Literacy Decade and report on the implementation of the present resolution to the Commission at its sixty-fourth session.

5th meeting
12 April 2006

62/9. Regional follow-up to the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States[10]

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling the Mauritius Declaration and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, adopted by the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, held in Port Lewis from 10 to 14 January 2005, taking into account new and emerging issues,

Also recalling its resolution 61/9 of 18 May 2005, in which it called upon the members of the Thematic Working Group on Environment and Development under the Regional Coordination Mechanism to play an effective role in the implementation of the Regional Implementation Plan for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific 2006-2010 adopted by the Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific, held in Seoul from 24 to 29 March 2005, as well as its regional initiatives, including the Seoul Initiative on Environmentally Sustainable Economic Growth (Green Growth),

[10] See paragraphs 248 to 265 above.

Further recalling its resolution 60/1 of 28 April 2004 on the Shanghai Declaration, in which the special needs of small island developing States were recognized, as was the need to enhance subregional and regional integration and cooperation to support their development,

Recognizing that the United Nations Millennium Declaration articulated important goals and specific, measurable and time-bound targets related to poverty reduction, education, health and safe drinking water, and recognizing further their relevance to small island developing States,

Recognizing also that the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States set forth specific actions and measures to be taken at the national, regional and international levels in support of the sustainable development of small island developing States, in such areas as biodiversity, climate change, and coastal and marine resource management,

Reaffirming the desire of small island developing States to participate effectively in and benefit from the Commission's activities as a whole,

Bearing in mind that assistance to small island developing States will need to take into account their unique economic and social situations resulting from their isolation, small size and vulnerability to environmental hazards,

Welcoming the strengthening of the Least Developed Countries Coordinating Unit at ESCAP,

1. *Reaffirms* its support for the issues identified by the Mauritius Strategy for follow-up action in order to further implement the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States;

2. *Stresses* that the successful implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States depends on shared responsibility and strengthened partnerships, including with civil society and the private sector, and invites all members and, as appropriate, associate members and subregional, regional and international organizations to support the efforts of small island developing States to address issues of national and regional sustainable development, which includes economic, social and environmental aspects;

3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, within existing regular budget resources, or through voluntary contributions, as available:

(a) To ensure that the activities of ESCAP, consistent with its programme of work, take into account the special needs of the small island developing States, as contained in the Mauritius Strategy;

(b) To review, analyse and disseminate information, as appropriate, on economic and social development in small island developing States, in line with the Mauritius Strategy;

(c) To provide regional inputs, as appropriate, into the final review of the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy;

(d) To report to the Commission at its sixty-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

5th meeting
12 April 2006

62/10. Strengthening statistical capacity in Asia and the Pacific[11]

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000 on the United Nations Millennium Declaration,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 60/1 of 16 September 2005 on the 2005 World Summit Outcome, which strongly reiterated the determination of Member States to ensure the timely and full realization of the development goals and objectives agreed at the major United Nations conferences and summits, including those agreed at the Millennium Summit that are described as the Millennium Development Goals,

Recalling further the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, as adopted in 1994 by the United Nations Statistical Commission,

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 2005/13 of 22 July 2005 on the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme, in which the Council recognized the increasing importance of the 2010 round of population and housing censuses for meeting data needs for the follow-up activities to the Millennium Summit,

Recognizing the need to strengthen the capacity of many of the developing countries of the region to produce on a regular basis a minimum set of statistical data needed for monitoring social, economic and environmental conditions and designing and evaluating evidence-based policies,

Recognizing the difficulties that many developing countries face in implementing some of the major long-standing international statistical standards,

Encouraged by the capacity-building and other initiatives that are taking place at the national and international levels, in response to relevant international plans and programmes,

1. *Invites* members and, as appropriate, associate members to give priority to the strengthening of their official statistical systems;

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[11] See paragraphs 164 to 168 above.

2. *Encourages* members and, as appropriate, associate members and relevant international organizations and institutions with advanced statistical systems to share expertise and information on their methodological, technological and managerial practices in statistical offices for the benefit of other countries in the region;

3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, within existing regular budget resources, or through voluntary contributions, as available:

(a) To assist members and, as appropriate, associate members to develop their statistical systems, strengthening their capacity to collect, compile, process, analyse, disseminate and use official statistics;

(b) To provide assistance to members and, as appropriate, associate members in strengthening their capacity to monitor progress towards development goals and the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

(c) To facilitate the development and implementation of international statistical standards in the region;

(d) To facilitate regional discussion and the sharing of information and good practices related to official statistics;

(e) To facilitate the coordination of international capacity-building activities related to the development of official statistics in the region, including cooperation among national statistical offices of developing countries;

(f) To facilitate the dissemination and use of data, including by providing a user-friendly platform to access socio-economic and environmental indicators in an internationally comparable format;

(g) To coordinate with regional and international agencies in the collection of official statistical data from members and, as appropriate, associate members in order to avoid duplication of effort and to minimize the response burden on national statistical systems;

(h) To report on the implementation of the present resolution to the Commission at its sixty-seventh session.

5th meeting
12 April 2006

62/11. Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010[12]

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration and, in particular, the Millennium Development Goals, which are aimed, inter alia, at the eradication of poverty,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 55/279 of 12 July 2001, in which the Assembly endorsed the Brussels Declaration and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010,

Recalling further the 2005 World Summit Outcome, which, inter alia, reaffirmed the commitment to address the special needs of the least developed countries and urged all countries and all relevant organizations of the United Nations system to make concerted efforts and adopt speedy measures for meeting in a timely manner the goals and targets of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 60/228 of 23 December 2005, in which the Assembly called for the convening of a high-level meeting on the mid-term comprehensive global review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010, and its related preparatory meetings,

Recalling Commission resolution 59/4 on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010, in which it expressed its strong support for the full realization of the seven commitments made at the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and the Programme of Action, as well as the recommendations emanating from the international conferences on the landlocked developing countries and small island developing States,

Welcoming the enhanced focus on least developed countries by the international community since the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries,

1. *Reaffirms* its commitment to the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 so that the least developed countries of Asia and the Pacific will be able to attain internationally agreed development goals;

2. *Recognizes* the need for coherent results-based national development strategies aimed at poverty reduction, as envisaged in the Programme of Action, and effective implementation of policies leading to economic growth and sustainable development;

3. *Emphasizes* the need for appropriate strategies and greater political will by the least developed countries as well as continued commitment by their development partners, including international financial institutions, to address emerging challenges;

4. *Takes note* of the recommendations of the Regional Review of the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed

[12] See paragraphs 248 to 260 above.

Countries for the Decade 2001-2010, which was held in Bangkok on 14 and 15 March 2006, and requests members and, as appropriate, associate members in the region to fulfil their commitments as contained in the Programme of Action;

5. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, within existing regular budget resources, or through voluntary contributions, as available, in close coordination with United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and related organizations in Asia and the Pacific:

(a) To ensure that the activities of ESCAP, consistent with its programme of work, take into account the special needs of the least developed countries, as contained in the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010;

(b) To analyse and disseminate information on economic and social development in the least developing country members for submission to ESCAP thematic committees and intergovernmental committees, to promote greater awareness of the special concerns of least developed countries;

(c) To explore with donors the possibility of establishing a fund to support the participation of least developed countries in key ESCAP meetings;

(d) To assist the least developed countries, where appropriate, in the formulation of appropriate development strategies and policies in line with the Programme of Action;

(e) To provide regional inputs, as appropriate, into the final review of the implementation of the Programme of Action;

(f) To report to the Commission on the implementation of the present resolution at the sixty-fourth session through the Special Body on Least Developed and Landlocked Developing Countries.

5th meeting
12 April 2006

62/12. Strengthening Pacific island developing countries and territories through regional cooperation[13]

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling its earlier resolutions on the Commission's activities in the Pacific, in particular resolutions 237 (XL) of 27 April 1984 concerning institutional changes to increase the effectiveness of the Commission's role in the economic and social development of Pacific island developing countries, 269 (XLIV) of 20 April 1988 committing ESCAP to take special measures in favour of the Pacific island developing countries and increase the relevance and effectiveness of the Commission's role and activities in the Pacific and 60/6 of 28 April 2004 on revitalization of the United Nations ESCAP Pacific Operations Centre (UN-EPOC), and noting especially the establishment of subprogramme 3, which is intended to enable the secretariat, including UN-EPOC, to assist Pacific island countries in building up their policy and management capacity to, among other things, achieve the internationally agreed goals and targets contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000, the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 and the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,

Recalling also its resolution 58/1 of 22 May 2002 on restructuring the conference structure of the Commission, in particular annex VI by which it revised and focused the terms of reference of the Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries for it to undertake periodic review and analysis of special problems of Pacific island developing countries and territories, so as to mobilize ideas for promoting policy options to maximize the benefits they obtain from globalization, and assist in strengthening their capacity to implement poverty reduction policies and programmes and address emerging social issues in the context of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the United Nations Millennium Declaration,

Recognizing the importance that the above-mentioned international agreements and particularly the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development attach to trade as a source of economic growth and a means for making poverty reduction strategies more sustainable and improving the living standards of people in small island developing States, and recognizing their relevance to Pacific island developing countries,

Recognizing also the efforts of countries in the region to assist Pacific island developing countries, which will contribute to the economic development of Pacific island countries, and South-South cooperation,

Appreciating that economic development opportunities for Pacific island countries can be enlarged by strengthening links to the economic dynamism and high growth economies of Asia,

Recognizing the desire of Pacific island developing countries and, as appropriate, associate members to participate effectively in and benefit from the Commission's activities as a whole,

Recognizing also that, at the Meeting of Pacific Islands Forum Leaders held in Papua New Guinea in 2005, Pacific island countries formulated and adopted the Pacific Plan for Strengthening Regional Cooperation and Integration in support of national development efforts,

Affirming that all development strategies must be nationally driven and owned,

[13] See paragraphs 248 to 265 above.

Welcoming the convening of the Pacific Leaders United Nations ESCAP Special Session, held in Jakarta on 10 April 2006 during the sixty-second session of the Commission,

Welcoming also the revitalization of the United Nations ESCAP Pacific Operations Centre and the establishment of subprogramme 3, Development of Pacific island developing countries and territories, pursuant to Commission resolution 60/6 of 28 April 2004,

1. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, within existing regular budget resources, or through voluntary contributions, as available:

(a) To take into account, consistent with the mandate of the UN-EPOC and the ESCAP programme of work, the development approach of regionalism and the priorities set out in the Pacific Plan for Strengthening Regional Cooperation and Integration in technical cooperation activities for Pacific Island developing countries;

(b) To (i) undertake research and analysis and provide advice and technical assistance aimed at building the capacity of Pacific Island developing countries to benefit from their relations with the countries of Asia in, among others, the areas of trade and investment; and (ii) investigate, in conjunction with relevant Pacific tourism bodies, options for a forum to share Asian and Pacific experiences in tourism development, to be held in 2007;

(c) To promote the South-South cooperation mechanism in order to assist Pacific Island developing countries in implementing the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the Pacific Plan with a view to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

5th meeting
12 April 2006

B. Other decisions

Decision 62/1

Deferment of consideration of the draft resolution on the establishment of the Asian and Pacific Centre for ICST-enabled Disaster Management (APIDM)[14]

At its fifth plenary meeting, on 12 April 2006, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific decided to defer consideration of the draft resolution submitted by the Islamic Republic of Iran and entitled "Establishment of the Asian and Pacific Centre for ICST-enabled Disaster Management (APIDM)" until the sixty-third session of the Commission.

Decision 62/2

Procedure followed in the adoption of the report of the Commission on its sixty-second session[15]

At its fifth plenary meeting, on 12 April 2006, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific adopted the draft report on its sixty-second session, noting that, except for references to "the Commission elected" or "the Commission endorsed", all statements therein refer to views expressed by one or more delegations, and not to official views or decisions of the Commission.

[14] See paragraphs 109 and 110 above.

[15] Pursuant to the statement made by the Chairman during the adoption of the report at the fifth plenary meeting.

Annex I

STATEMENTS OF PROGRAMME BUDGET IMPLICATIONS OF ACTIONS AND PROPOSALS OF THE COMMISSION

I. Programme budget implications of the draft resolution on achieving the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific

Adopted as resolution 62/1

A. Requests contained in the draft resolution

In the draft resolution, the Commission requests the Executive Secretary, within existing regular budget resources, or through voluntary contributions, as available:

(a) Within its mandate, to strengthen regional policy dialogue for development, including on technical assistance and capacity-building, in cooperation with other bodies of the United Nations system including the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and relevant international organizations including the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), within their respective mandates and competence, in a coherent manner, with a view to developing appropriate ways and means to expedite achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in the ESCAP region, including by addressing pressing economic and social issues;

(b) To continue to assist, within the mandate of ESCAP and in close coordination with other entities of the United Nations system and other relevant international organizations, the members and, as appropriate, associate members in their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals through, inter alia, carrying out capacity-building and technical cooperation activities;

(c) To increase the effectiveness of the regional advisory services and regional subsidiary bodies of ESCAP in assisting member countries in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development;

(d) To continue to assess progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific in cooperation with relevant international organizations, such as the United Nations Development Programme and the Asian Development Bank, and to transmit progress assessment to the Economic and Social Council, and especially to its annual ministerial-level substantive reviews, for consideration;

(e) To develop recommendations for achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 in the form of a regional road map, by developing and refining existing elements, and building also on related efforts or processes;

(f) To report to the Commission at its sixty-third session on the implementation of the resolution.

B. Relationship of the requests to the biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2006-2007

The requests contained in the draft resolution fall under the overall programme of work of ESCAP but are particularly relevant to subprogramme 1, Poverty and development, which aims to enable internationally agreed goals and targets relating to poverty reduction and social economic development to be achieved.

C. Activities by which the requests would be implemented

(1) Background of the requests

The background of the requests is set out in the preambular paragraphs of the draft resolution, especially in the expression by the Commission of its commitment to make poverty reduction the overarching objective of developmental partnership and cooperation in Asia and the Pacific.

(2) Activities (with time frame, where applicable) by which the requests would be implemented

(a) The secretariat will ensure that the strategic direction of the programme of work derives from the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration and in the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and international agreements since 1992, while also ensuring that the special needs of least developed and landlocked countries, small island developing States, and countries with economies in transition are mainstreamed into all subprogrammes.

(b) The secretariat will focus on Millennium Development Goal areas of common concern to countries that would benefit from an exchange of experiences, policy dialogue, the sharing of good practices, mutual technical support and agreement on joint action, especially through the promotion of South-South cooperation. Moreover, to further enhance regional collaboration for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, the secretariat, in cooperation with UNDP and ADB, will develop and implement a regional advocacy and communication strategy on the Goals to create awareness and promote support for the Goals at all levels.

(c) In each subprogramme, the secretariat will conduct capacity development and technical cooperation activities to support members and associate members in their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by, inter alia, identifying and promoting good practices in poverty reduction, producing policy-oriented publications, undertaking pilot projects, disseminating lessons learned and organizing regional and subregional forums, as appropriate, to enhance intra- and interregional collaboration for the development of innovative ways and means to promote the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in the region.

(d) The secretariat will continue to provide regional advisory services to support national capacity-building efforts in key areas, including environment and sustainable development, poverty reduction, ICT policies and strategies, economic statistics, development policy and strategic planning, social development and planning, and trade and investment policy.

(e) The secretariat will continue to assess and prepare reports on progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific in cooperation with relevant international organizations, such as UNDP and ADB, as well as to transmit these progress assessments to the Economic and Social Council, and especially to its annual ministerial-level substantive reviews, for consideration.

(f) The secretariat will develop recommendations for achievement of the MDGs by 2015 in the form of a regional road map, by developing and refining existing elements, and building also on related efforts or processes.

(g) The secretariat will report to the Commission at its sixty-third session on the implementation of the resolution.

(3) Relation to the approved programme of work for 2006-2007

The requests fall within the approved programme of work for 2006-2007.

(4) Implications for the programme of work for 2008-2009

It is expected that relevant activities will continue in the biennium 2008-2009.

D. Modification required of the approved programme of work for 2006-2007

The implementation of the request would not require any modification of the approved programme of work for the biennium 2006-2007.

E. Additional regular or extrabudgetary requirements at full cost for 2006-2007 in relation to item D above

On an ongoing basis, extrabudgetary resources will be sought in support of the programme of work of ESCAP with a particular emphasis on issues identified in the context of this resolution. The successful implementation of the approved programme of work requires no increase beyond the regular budget and extrabudgetary resource estimates indicated in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 (A/60/6 (sect.18)).

F. Potential for absorption

Please see section G.

G. Summary

a. With regard to the reference to "within existing regular budget resources, or through voluntary contributions, as available" in operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution, it will be recalled that the General Assembly by its resolution 45/248 B of 21 December 1990 on procedures for administrative and budgetary matters:

i. Reaffirms that the Fifth Committee is the appropriate Main Committee of the General Assembly entrusted with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters;

ii. Reaffirms also the role of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions;

iii. Expresses its concern at the tendency of its substantive Committees and other intergovernmental bodies to involve themselves in administrative and budgetary matters;

iv. Invites the Secretary-General to provide all intergovernmental bodies with the required information regarding procedures for administrative and budgetary matters.

b. By its resolution 54/249 of 23 December 1999, the General Assembly endorsed an observation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions regarding reference to "existing resources", whereby the Committee emphasized the responsibility of the Secretariat to inform intergovernmental organs concerned thoroughly and accurately whether there are enough resources to implement a new activity.

c. This resolution will have no programme budget implications for the regular budget of the United Nations. Extrabudgetary resources on a level similar to that of previous years will be sought for the implementation of the required activities.

II. Programme budget implications of the draft resolution on the Jakarta Declaration on enhancing regional cooperation in infrastructure development, including that related to disaster management

Adopted as resolution 62/2

A. Requests contained in the draft declaration

In the draft declaration, the Commission requests the Executive Secretary, within existing regular budget resources, or through voluntary contributions, as available:

(a) To promote appropriate instruments and modalities for enhancing regional cooperation in infrastructure development through, inter alia, capacity-building, technical cooperation activities and the promotion of the interoperability, interconnectedness and intermodality components of infrastructure development, including maritime infrastructure, as appropriate;

(b) To forge closer cooperation with United Nations bodies, development agencies and multilateral financing institutions, as well as donors, as appropriate within their respective mandates, to strengthen global partnerships for infrastructure development, including that related to disaster risk management, reconstruction and rehabilitation;

(c) To assist members and, as appropriate, associate members with developing policy responses to promote renewable and environmentally friendly energy sources, energy efficiency and related infrastructure;

(d) To continue efforts to ascertain the views of the member States to identify and address the investment needs and priorities of members, and, as appropriate, of associate members, in infrastructure development, including that which contributes towards the integration of regional infrastructure;

(e) To report to the Commission at its sixty-fourth session on the implementation of the declaration.

B. Relationship of the requests to the biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2006-2007

The requests contained in the draft declaration fall under the overall programme of work of ESCAP for 2006-2007.

C. Activities by which the requests would be implemented

(1) Background to the requests

The background to the requests is set out in the preambular paragraphs of the draft declaration.

(2) Activities (with time frame, where applicable) by which the requests would be implemented

Request a:

The secretariat will formulate projects to strengthen regional cooperation and to provide technical assistance in the specified areas.

Request b:

The secretariat will prepare documents on policies and strategies in the region, including the participation of ESCAP in consultations with global partners on disaster risk management, reconstruction and rehabilitation.

Request c:

The secretariat will undertake policy research and reviews, consultations and the preparation of a series of studies and will arrange policy dialogues and assist members and associate members in developing their national policy responses and strategies.

In order for the secretariat to carry out these activities, commitments from participating members and associate members will be needed in order to sustain the process by linking and synergizing this initiative with national projects and initiatives.

Request d:

The secretariat will ascertain the views of member States by utilizing existing mechanisms, including legislative thematic committees, the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission, and policy dialogues with Governments and other modalities, as appropriate.

Request e:

The secretariat will report to the Commission at its sixty-fourth session on the implementation of the declaration.

(3) Relation to the approved programme of work for 2006-2007

The requests fall within the framework of the approved programme of work for 2006-2007.

(4) Implications for the programme of work for the biennium 2008-2009

The programme of work for the biennium 2008-2009 would be developed against the background of the declaration.

D. Modification required of the approved programme of work for 2006-2007

Requests (a) to (e) can be addressed under ongoing and planned activities within the approved programme of work for the biennium 2006-2007.

Programmes of work for succeeding bienniums will be developed against the background of the declaration.

E. Additional regular or extrabudgetary requirements at full cost for 2006-2007 in relation to item D above

Regular budget

Requests (a) to (e) would not require any additional regular budget resources for the biennium 2006-2007.

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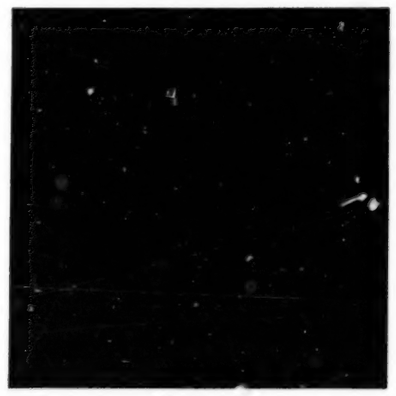

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